JOHN OWEN D.D.

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THE CHRISTIANS DAILY WALK, IN HOLY SECURITY and PEACE.

Being an Anſwer to theſe Queſtions.

I. How a Man may do each preſent Day's Work with Chriſtian Chearfulneſs?

II. How to bear each preſent Day's Croſs with Chriſtian Patience?

Containing familiar DIRECTIONS.

SHEWING

1. How to walk with GOD in the whole Courſe of a Man's Life.
2. How to be upright in the ſaid Walking.
3. How to live without anxious Care or Thought, in any Thing.
4. How to get and keep true Peace with GOD; wherein are manifold Helps, to prevent and remove damnable Preſumption; alſo to quiet and eaſe diſtreſſed Conſciences.

By *Henry Scudder*, Miniſter of *Collingborn-ducis*, in *Wiltſhire*.——Recommended by Dr. *Owen*, and Mr. *Baxter*.

Iſa. xxx. 21. *Thine Ears ſhall hear a Voice behind thee, ſaying, This is the Way, walk ye in it.*

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Dr. OWEN
TO THE
READER.

IT is now above Thirty Years ago ſince I firſt peruſed the enſuing Treatiſe. And although until upon this preſent Occaſion I never read it ſince; yet the Impreſſion it left upon me in the Days of my Youth, have (to ſay no more) continued a grateful Remembrance of it upon my Mind. Being therefore unexpectedly upon this new Edition deſired, by him concerned therein, to give ſome Teſtimony unto it's Worth and Uſefulneſs; I eſteem myſelf obliged ſo to do, by the Benefit I had myſelf formerly received by it. But conſidering the great diſtance of Time ſince I read it, and how [illegible] perhaps that there might be ſince that Time ſome little Improvement of Judgment about ſpiritual Things in my own Mind; I durſt not expreſs my Thoughts concerning it, until I had given it another peruſal: which I have now done. I ſhall only acquaint

the Reader, that I am ſo far from ſubducting my Account, or making an abatement in an eſteem thereof, that my reſpect unto it, and valuation of it is greatly increaſed; wherein alſo I do rejoice, for Reaſons not here to be mentioned. For although perhaps, ſome few things might be expreſſed in different Words or Order, yet there is generally that Soundneſs and Gravity in the whole Doctrine of the Book, that Weight and Wiſdom in the Directions given in it for Practice, that Judgment in the Reſolution of Doubts and Objections, that breathing of a Spirit of Holineſs, Zeal, Humility, and the Fear of the Lord in the whole; that I judge and am ſatisfied therein, that it will be found of ſingular uſe unto all ſuch as in Sincerity deſire a compliance with his Deſign; namely, ſuch a walking with God here, that we may come to the Enjoyment of him hereafter. I do know, that in the Days wherein we live, there are other Notions eſteemed higher or more raiſed, and thoſe otherwiſe expreſſed with more Elegancy of Words, and preſſed with more appearing ſtrenuous Ratiocinations than thoſe contained in this Book, wherewith the Generality of Profeſſors ſeem to be more taken and ſatisfied. But for my part, I muſt ſay, that I do find

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in this, and ſome other practical Diſcourſes of the worthy Miniſters of the Age paſt, that Authority and powerful Evidence of Truth, ariſing from a plain transferring of the ſacred Senſe of the Scripture in Words and Expreſſions ſuited to the Experience of gracious, honeſt, and humble Souls, that the moſt accurate and adorned Diſcourſes of this Age do not attain or riſe up unto. Such, I ſay, is this Diſcourſe; the Wiſdom and Ability of whoſe Author diſcovers themſelves from firſt to laſt, not in expreſſing his Mind *with enticing Words of Man's Wiſdom*, but in an evident deduction of all his uſeful Directions from expreſs Teſtimonies of Scripture, in ſuch a way as to give light unto them, without intercepting the influence of their Authority on the Minds and Conſciences of the Readers. I ſhall therefore ſay no more, but, that if thoſe into whoſe hands this Book ſhall come, be not either openly or ſecretly Enemies unto the whole Deſign of it, as being *alienated from the Life of God through the Ignorance that is in them*, or be not poſſeſſed with prejudices againſt the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and that ſtrictneſs of Obedience it requireth; they will find that Guidance, Direction, and ſpiritual Advantage, as having their Faith, Love, and

Obedience, increaſed and improved thereby; which will iſſue in the praiſe of God's Grace, that ought to be the end of all our Writing and Reading in this World.

Feb. 24, 1673-4.

JOHN OWEN.

7 DE 61

Mr.

Mr. BAXTER,

TO THE

READER.

Reader,

I Take it for ſome Diſhonour to our Age, that ſuch a Book as this ſhould need any Man's Recommendation, to procure its Entertainment, having been ſo long known, and ſo greatly approved by the moſt judicious and religious Miniſters and People, as it hath been; even to be to practical Chriſtians inſtead of many, for the ordering of their daily courſe of Life, and ſecuring their Salvation and well-grounded Peace. And though I know that here are ſome few Words, eſpecially about *Perſeverance*, of which all good Chriſtians are not fully of one Mind, (and I never undertake to juſtify *every Word* in my own Books or any others, while we all confeſs that we

are not abſolutely infallible;) yet I muſt ſay, (without diſparagement to any Man's Labours,) that I remember not any Book which is written to be the daily Companion of Chriſtians to guide them in the Practice of a Holy Life, which I prefer before this: I am ſure, none of my own. For ſo ſound is the Doctrine of this Book, and ſo prudent and ſpiritual, apt and ſavory the Directions, and all ſo fully ſuited to our ordinary Caſes and Conditions, that I heartily wiſh no Family might be without it. And many a Volume (good and uſeful) are now in Religious Peoples Hands, which I had rather were all unknown than this. And I think it more Service to the Souls of Men, to call Men to the Notice and Uſe of ſuch a Treaſure, and to bring ſuch old and excellent Writings out of Oblivion and the Duſt, than to encourage very many who over-value their own, and to promote the Multiplication of Things common and undigeſted, to the burying of more excellent Treatiſes in the Heap.

Reader, If thou wilt make this Book (after the ſacred Scripture) thy daily Counſellor, and Monitor, and Comforter, I am aſſured the Experience of thy own great Advantage, and Increaſe of Wiſdom, Holineſs and Peace, will commend

it

it to thee more effectually than my Words can do.

Read, love and practiſe that which is here taught thee, and doubt not of thy everlaſting Happineſs.

Jan. 16th, 1673-4.

RICHARD BAXTER.

7 DE61

The EPISTLE TO THE READER.

THE *ſearching out of Mans* true happineſs *hath exerciſed the Wits and Pens of many* Philoſophers *and* Divines *with a different ſucceſs.*

1. *Some, by a miſtake of the end have erred about the means. All their enterprizes have ended in* Vanity *and* Vexation, *whilſt they have caught at the ſhadow of fruit in a hedge of thorns, and have neglected the tree itſelf, whence the fruit might have been gathered with more certainty, and leſs trouble. Mans natural corruption, has ſo darkened his* underſtanding, Eph. iv. 18. *that in vain have the wiſeſt* Men *ſought the* happineſs, *which without the help of God's Word and Spirit, they could never find.* Act. xvii. 27. *And his ſpiritual appetite, and taſte is ſo diſtempered, that he can judge of the* chief good *no better then a ſick man can do of the beſt of meats.*

2. *Others,* Eph. i. 18. having the eyes of their underſtanding lightned, and their ſenſes

ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil, Heb. v. 12. *have concluded that, mans* true happineſs *conſiſts in the ſoul's enjoyment of God by an holy conformity, and ſweet communion with him, through Chriſt Jeſus.*

For what elſe is true happineſs *than the enjoyment of the* chief good? *And that* God *is the* chief good, *appears in this, that all the properties, which exalt goodneſs to the higheſt perfection, are in* God *only. For he is the moſt* pure, John i. 5. perfect, univerſal, primary, unchangeable, communicative, deſireable, *and* delightful good: Gen. i. 31. *the* efficient, pattern, and utmoſt end *of all* good; Gen. i. 27. *without whom there is neither* natural, moral, *nor* ſpiritual good *in any creature.* 1 Pet. i. 16. Pro. xvi. 4. Mat. xix. 17. *Our conformity to him, the Apoſtle* Peter *expreſſeth, when he ſaith, that* the ſaints are made partakers of the Divine Nature; 2 Pet. i. 4. *That is,* they are renewed in the Spirit of their mind, and have put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs, Eph. iv. 23, 24. *So that they have,* 1. *A new* light *in their* underſtanding, Col. iii. 10. *that they* know God, *not only as Creator, but as Redeemer alſo of the world,* John xvii. 3. *and whilſt they* behold, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord, with open face, they are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory,

as by the ſpirit of the Lord, *This* knowledge is begun *in this life*, *in the* knowledge *of* Faith, Iſa. liii. 11. *and ſhall be perfected in the life to come*, *in the* knowledge of ſenſe, Rom. viii. 24. *this is* in a glaſs; *that ſhall be* face to face, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12. *Secondly*, *they have a* new life *in their will and affections*, *that is*, *they have diſpoſitions and inclinations in their hearts*, *conformable to the directions of God's holy Word. This the Apoſtle* Paul *intended*, *when he ſaid of the* Romans, *that they had* obeyed from the heart, the form of doctrine, whereunto they were delivered, Rom. vi. 17. *that is*, *the Word is as a Mould whereinto being caſt*, *they were faſhioned according to it. Hence it is*, *that the* Saints *are ſaid to be* Sealed with the holy Spirit, Eph. i. 13. *becauſe as the Seal leaves its print upon the Wax*, *ſo the* Spirit *makes holy impreſſions in the ſoul: this is called* the writing of the Law in our hearts, Jer. xxxi. 32. *in alluſion whereunto the Apoſtle* compares *the* hearts *of believers to* Tables, 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3. *and their* affections *or* converſation *to an* Epiſtle, *which is ſaid to be* read and underſtood of all men, *when they walk as examples of the Rule*, 2 Cor. iii. 2.

3. *Hence it is that godlineſs hath a* ſelf-ſufficiency *joined with it*, 1 Tim. vi. 6. *Becauſe the Chriſtian is now in Communion with* GOD,

GOD, whoſe face when a man beholds in righteouſneſs, he ſhall be ſatisfied with his image, Pſal. xvii. 15. *Hence comes that* Peace *of Conſcience*, joy unſpeakable and glorious, *and that* holy triumph *and exultation of Spirit, which you may obſerve in the Apoſtle* Paul, *and others*, Rom. v. 1. 1 Pet. i. 8. Rom. viii. 25.

Having briefly ſhewed what this conformity, *and* communion *with God is. I will add one or two more words to make it manifeſt, that only thoſe are* truly happy *which are in this eſtate. For*, 1. *Man's utmoſt end is, that it may be* perfectly well *with him, which he can never attain unto without Communion with God, who is the Father of Spirits, and the beſt of goods. Other things are deſired, as ſubordinate to this.* The Body *is for the* Soul, *as the matter for its form, or the inſtrument for its agent.* Human Wiſdom *and* moral Virtues *are deſired, not for themſelves, but for the fruit that is expected by them, as* glory, pleaſure, *and* riches. *Worldly, and bodily* pleaſures, *exceſſively deſired, are as drink in a Fever, or Dropſy; better it is to be without the malady then to enjoy that remedy.* Riches *are deſired not for themſelves, but for the conveniencies of life.* Life *is not ſo much deſired for itſelf as for the enjoyment of* happineſs, *which when a man hath ſought in the labyrinth of earthly vanities,*

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after much vexation, and diſquietude of ſpirit, he muſt conclude, that it is only in that trueſt *and* chiefeſt good, *which is the fountain whence true delight firſt floweth, and the object, wherein finally it reſteth.*

Secondly, that is man's happineſs, *in the poſſeſſion and enjoyment whereof his heart reſteth* beſt ſatisfied. *So far a man is from true* happineſs *as he is from full contentment in that which he enjoys. The* Bee *would not ſit upon ſo many flowers, if ſhe could gather honey enough from any one, neither would* Solomon *have tried ſo many concluſions, if the enjoyment of any creature could have made him happy. Would you know the cauſe why ſo many (like* Ixion) *make love to ſhadows and leave the ſubſtance, or (that I may ſpeak in a better phraſe)* Jer. ii. 13. forſake the fountain of living water, and dig to themſelves broken Ciſterns that will hold no Water? *Briefly, it is becauſe man, who in his pride would have ſeen as much as God, is now become ſo blind that he ſeeth not* himſelf. Gen. iii. 5. *For if men knew either the* diſpoſition *of their ſouls by Creation, or the* indiſpoſition *of their ſouls by corruption, they would eaſily eſcape this deluſion.* 1. *The ſoul is a* ſpiritual *ſubſtance, whoſe original is from God, and therefore its reſt muſt be in God; as the Rivers run into the Sea, and as every body reſts in its center. The nobleſt faculties are*

abaſed

abaſed not improved, abuſed not imployed, vexed not ſatisfied, when they are ſubjected to theſe inferior objects, as when Nebuchadnezzar fed amongſt beaſts, Dan. iv. 29. *Or, as when* Servants rode on horſe-back, and Maſters walked like Servants on the ground, Eccleſ. x. 7.

2. *Conſider the ſoul as it is in this ſtate of corruption, nothing can now content it, but that which can* cure it. *The ſoul is full of ſin, which is the moſt* painful ſickneſs; *hence the Prophet compares wicked men to the raging waves of the Sea, that is never at reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt*; Iſa. lvii. 1. *what will you do to comfort him that is heart-ſick? Bring him the choiceſt delicates, he cannot reliſh them; compaſs him about with merry company, and muſick, its tedious and troubleſome to him; bring him to a better chamber, lay him in an eaſier bed; all will not ſatisfy him. But bring the* Phyſician *to him; then he conceives hopes; let the Phyſician* cure *him of his diſtemper, and then he will eat courſer meat, with a better ſtomach, and ſleep on a harder bed, in a worſe chamber, with a more chearful and contented heart.*

Juſt ſo it is with a guilty Conſcience, though he is not always ſenſible of it. What comfort can his friends give him, when God is his enemy? *What delight can he take in his ſtately buildings, or frequent viſits, who may expect, even*

even this night, *to have his* ſoul *required of* him, *and be made a Companion with Devils?* Luke xii. 20. *What is a golden chain about a* leprous *perſon, or the richeſt apparel upon a* dead *carcaſe? Or, what comfort will a coſtly banquet yield to a* condemned *malefactor, who is juſt going to execution? Surely no more than* Adam *found, when he had ſinned in the* Garden, Gen. iii. 10. *or than* Haman *had, when* Ahaſſuerus *frowned on him in the* Banquet, Eſt. vii. 6, 7, 8. — *On the other ſide; let a Man be in Peace with God, and, in a ſweet Communion, enjoy the influence of heavenly graces and comforts in his ſoul,* Rom. v. 3. Acts xvi. 25. Pſal. xxiii. 4. *he can* rejoice in tribulation, ſing in priſon, ſolace himſelf in death, *and comfort his heart againſt* principalities, and powers, tribulation, and anguiſh, height and depth, things preſent and things to come. *This* true happineſs, *which all men deſire, (but moſt miſs it, by miſtaking the way conducing to it,)* Rom. viii. 38, 39. *is the ſubject matter of this Book. Here you may learn the right* way of peace, Rom. iii. *How a man may do every days* duty conſcionably, *and bear every days* croſs comfortably; *receive it thankfully, and read it carefully.*

But this courſe is too ſtrict?

In bodily *diſtempers we account that Phyſician the wiſeſt and beſt, who regards more*

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the health *than the* will *of his patient. The Carpenter ſquares his Work by the Rule, not the Rule by his Work. Oh miſerable man, what an Antipathy againſt Truth is in thy curſed corrupted Nature, which had rather periſh by falſe principles, then be ſaved by receiving and obeying the truth! But ſecondly, as it is* ſtrict *ſo it is* neceſſary, *and in that caſe,* ſtrictneſs *doth not blunt, but ſharpen the edge of induſtry to duty. Therefore ſaith our Savior,* ſtrive to enter in at the ſtraight gate, Luke xiii. 24. *that is, therefore ſtrive to enter, becauſe the gate is ſtraight.* Bradford *well compared the way of Religion to a narrow bridge, over a large and deep river; from which the leaſt turning awry is dangerous. We ſee into what a Gulph of Miſery,* Adam *plunged himſelf, and his poſterity, by ſtepping aſide from God's way. Therefore forget not theſe Rules of the Apoſtle;* Walk circumſpectly, *and* make ſtraight paths to your feet, leaſt that which is *lame* be turned out of the way, Eph. v. 15. Heb. xii. 13.

2. *But many of God's children* attain not *to this ſtrictneſs, yet are ſaved.*

It's true; though all God's children travel to one Country, yet not with equal ſpeed; they all ſhoot at one mark, yet not with the ſame dexterity. Some difference there is in the outward action, none in their inward intention, *ſome inequalities there is in the event, none in the*

the affection: *In degrees there is ſome diſparity, none in* truth *and* uprightneſs. *All that are regenerate are alike ſtrict in theſe* five *things, at leaſt. Firſt, they have but one* path, *or* way *wherein they* all *walk*, Iſa. xxxv. 8. *Secondly, they have but one* rule *to guide them in that way, which they all follow*, Gal. vi. 15, 16. *Thirdly, all their eyes are upon this rule, ſo as they are not* willingly ignorant of *any truth*, 2 Pet. iii. 5. *Nor do they ſuppreſs, or detain any known* truth in unrighteouſneſs, Rom. i. 18. *but* they ſtand in the ways, and aſk for the old path, which is the good way, Jer. vi. 16. *Fourthly, they* all *deſire, and endeavour to obey every truth*, Luke i. 9. *not only to* walk in all the Commandments of God without reproof, *before men*, Heb. xiii. 19. *but alſo*, in all things, to live honeſtly, and uprightly, before God, Gen. xvii. 1. *Fifthly, If they* fall, by occaſion, Gal. vi. 1. (*as a member may, by accident, be dis-jointed*) *yet they are in pain till they be* ſet right again; *if they ſtumble, through infirmity, (as ſheep may ſlip into a puddle) yet they will not lye down, and wallow in the mire, which is the property of Swine: If they are ſometimes drawn aſide, by violent temptations, or ſtep aſide, by miſtake, yet they will not* walk on in the counſel of the wicked, Pſal. i. 1. nor will *any* way of wickedneſs, (*that is, a conſtant,*

or

or daily courſe in any one ſin) be found in them. They are ſo far from perverting the right ways of God, Acts xiii. 10. *(That is, ſpeaking evil of that is good) that they will juſtify God in condemning themſelves, and ſubſcribe to the righteouſneſs of his Word, praying, that their* ways might be directed to keep his ſtatutes, Pſal. cxix. 5.

To conclude, laying aſide all cavils, beg of God a teachable diſpoſition, and make the beſt profit of the labours of this faithful ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt. For the matter *of this book, uſe it as thy daily Counſellor; learn to write by this coppy. I mean, ſtir up the gifts of God, that are in thee, to become more profitable to others, both in preſence, by diſcourſe, and in abſence, by writing.*

The Chriſtian and intelligent Reader ſhall find in this ſome things new, other things expreſſed in a new manner, all digeſted in ſuch a Method, with ſuch brevity, and perſpicuity, as was neceſſary to make the Book a vade mecum, *or* pocket companion, *eſpecially profitable to the* poor *and* illiterate.

I will here ſtop, wiſhing thee (candid and ſerious Reader) to conſider that account muſt be given of what thou readeſt, *as well as of what thou heareſt, and therefore, to join* prayer *with thy reading, that ſpiritual Wiſdom and ſtrength may be increaſed in thee for*

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the practice of what thou learneſt. So I commend the book to thy reading, and thee, and it to God's bleſſing.

Thine in the Lord Jeſus,

JOHN DAVENPORT.

7 DE61

THE CHRISTIANS DAILY WALK.

CHAP. I.

Of walking with GOD *in general.*

The INTRODUCTION.

BELOVED FRIEND, obſerving your forwardneſs and zeal in ſeeking to know how you might *pleaſe God*, and *ſave your ſoul:* I thought it would be acceptable and profitable to you, if I ſhould, by the infallible *Rule* of GOD's word, direct you how with moſt certainty, ſpeed, and eaſe, you might attain to this your holy *aim.* Wherefore, conſidering that moſt of GOD's children make their lives unprofitable, and uncomfortable, by troubling themſelves about *many things*, Luke x. 40, 41. and that

that too much in things *leſs needfull*; by caring and fearing what ſhall befall them and theirs hereafter, with reſpect unto this preſent life) that you may obtain *that one thing needfull*, Luke x. 42. and contain yourſelf within your own *line*, and *calling*; I exhort you heedfully to apply yourſelf to do *each preſent days work with Chriſtian chearfulneſs*, and to bear *each preſent days evil with Chriſtian patience*.

§. 1. *Walking with GOD deſcribed.*

THE beſt and ſureſt way to pleaſe GOD and gain a chearful, quiet heart in the way to heaven, is, To *walk with God in uprightneſs, (thro' faith in Jeſus Chriſt) being carefull in nothing: but in every thing, by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, to make your requeſt known unto God*, Which if you do, *The peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, ſhall ſo eſtabliſh your heart and mind, in and through Chriſt Jeſus, that you may live in an Heaven upon earth, and may be joyous and comfortable in all eſtates and conditions of life whatſoever*.

That you ſhould walk with GOD in uprightneſs, is commended to you in the cloud of Examples of *Enoch*, Gen. v. 22, 24. *Noah*, Gen. vi. 9. *Job*, Job i. 1. *David*, 1 King. ix. 4. *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, Luke i. 6. with many others renowned in Scripture. And is commanded to *Abraham*, and in him to all the faithfull, Gen. xvii. 1.

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To live by faith (which is, to frame your heart and life according to the will of GOD revealed in his Word, and *to walk with God*, are all one. *Enoch* was ſaid to have walked with GOD; Gen.v. 24. what was this elſe but to *believe* and reſt on GOD, whereby he pleaſed him? Heb. xi. 5, 6. For, according to what *we live*, according to that we are ſaid to *walk*, Coloſ. iii. 7. The moral actions of man's life are fitly reſembled by the Metaphor of *Walking*, which is a moving from one place to another. No man while he liveth here, is at *home* in the place where he ſhall be, Heb. xiii. 14. There are two contrary *homes* to which every man is always going, either to *Heaven*, or to *Hell*. Every action of man is one pace or ſtep whereby he goeth to the one place or the other. The *holineſs* or *wickedneſs* of the *action* is the ſeveral ways to the place of *happineſs*, or place of *Torment*.

So that GOD's own children, while they live in this world as pilgrims and ſtrangers, are but in the *way*, not in the *Country* which they ſeek, which is *heaven*, Heb. xi. 3—16.

This life of faith and holineſs, 1 Theſ. i. 9, 10. what is it, but a *going out* of a man's ſelf, and a continual *returning to God* (by Chriſt Jeſus) from the way of ſin and death, and a conſtant perſeverance in all thoſe acts of Obedience which GOD hath *ordained to be the way, for all his children to walk* in unto eternal life? Eph. ii. 10.

A godly life is ſaid to be *a walking with God* in reſpect of *four* things that concur thereunto.

Firſt,

Firſt, whereas by *ſin* we naturally are *departed from God*, Iſa. liii. 6. and *gone away* from his ways which he hath appointed for us, Rom. iii. 12. we by the *new and living way* of Chriſt's death and reſurrection, Heb. x. 20. and by the new and living work of Chriſt's ſpirit, are brought near to GOD; and are ſet in the ways of GOD *by Repentance from dead works*, and *by faith towards God* in Chriſt Jeſus; which are the *firſt principles of true Religion*; Heb. vi. 1. and the firſt ſteps to this great duty of walking with GOD. Now to believe and to continue in the faith, is, to *walk in Chriſt*, Col. ii. 6, 7. therefore to *walk with God.*

Secondly, the *revealed will of God* is called *God's way*, becauſe in it GOD doth as it were diſplay the *ſecrets of his holy Majeſty*, to ſhew his people their *way* to him, and ſo bring them nigh unto himſelf; as the inſpired *pſalmiſt* ſpeaks: *Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him, and ſhall ſet us in the way of his ſteps*, Pſa. lxxxv. 13. Now this way of righteouſneſs revealed in the ſacred Scriptures, is the *rule* of a godly life; He which walketh according to GOD's law is ſaid to walk before GOD, (compare 1 Kings viii. 25. with 2 Chron. vi. 16.) So that he which walketh according to GOD's will in the various changes and conditions of life, keeping himſelf to this rule, *walketh with God.*

Thirdly, he that liveth a godly life, walketh *after the Spirit*, not after the fleſh. He is *led by the Spirit of God*, Rom. viii. 1, 14. having him

him for his guide; wherefore in this reſpect alſo he is ſaid to *walk with God*, Gal. v. 16.

Fourthly, he that walketh with GOD, ſees by the eye of faith, GOD *preſent with him* in all his actions; ſeriouſly thinking of him upon all occaſions, *remembering* him in his ways, Iſa. lxiv. 1. *Setting the Lord always before him*, as *David* did, Pſal. xvi. 8. *ſeeing him that is inviſible*, as *Moſes* did, Heb. xii. 27. Doing all things as St. *Paul* did, *as of God, in the ſight of God*, 2 Cor. ii. 27. Now he that ſo walketh that he *always obſerveth God's preſence, and keepeth him ſtill in his view* in the courſe of his life, and not only with a general and habitual, but, as much as he can, with an *actual* intention to pleaſe and glorify GOD, this man may be ſaid to *walk with God.*

Thus you may know when you walk with GOD: (1.) When you daily go on to repent of ſins paſt, believe in Jeſus Chriſt for pardon, and believe his Word for direction. (2.) When you walk not according to the will of man, but of GOD. (3.) When you walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit. (4.) When you ſet GOD before you, and walk as in his ſight, then you walk with, before, after, and according to GOD: for all theſe are underſtood in one ſenſe.

That you may *walk with God*; conſider theſe arguments farther to convince and induce you.

§. 2. *Reaſons why Chriſtians ſhould walk with* GOD.

FIRST, you are *commanded to walk as Chriſt walked*; 1 John ii. 6. and it concerns you ſo to do, if you would approve yourſelf to be a *member* of his body: for it is monſtrous, nay, impoſſible, that the Head ſhould go *one* way, and the body *another*. Now our Saviour himſelf obſerved all theſe methods of walking with God, juſtifying faith and repentance only excepted, becauſe he was without ſin.

Secondly, it is *all which the Lord requireth of you* for all his love and goodneſs ſhewed unto you, in creating, preſerving, redeeming, and ſaving you. For what doth the Lord *require* of you but to *do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?* Micah. vi. 8.

Thirdly, if you walk with God, and keep cloſe to him, you will be ſure to go in the *right way*, in that *good old way*, Jer. vi. 16. which is called the *way of holineſs*, Iſa. liii. 8. in a moſt *ſtraight*, Pro. iii. 17. moſt ſure, and (to a ſpiritual man) moſt *pleaſant way*; the *paths* of which *are peace*; the very happineſs and *reſt of the ſoul*, Jer. vi. 16. God teacheth his children to *chooſe this way*, Iſa. xlviii. 17. Pſal. lxxxv. 12. Pſal. xxxvii. 23. And if they happen to *err*, or to *doubt* of their way, they ſhall hear the voice of God's Spirit behind them, ſaying; *This is the way, walk in it*, Iſa. xxx. 21.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, if you walk with God, you ſhall *walk ſafely*; Pro. iii. 23, 24. Pſal. xxvii. 24. you will not need *to fear though ten thouſand ſet themſelves againſt you*, Pſal. iii. 5, 6. For his preſence is with you, and for you. His holy *Angels* encamp about you, Pſal. xxxiv. 7. And whilē you walk in his ways, they are charged to *ſupport you*, Pſal. lxxx. 11, 12. leaſt you ſhould receive any harm.

Fifthly, *When you walk with God*, (though you be alone, ſeperate from all other ſociety) *you ſtill walk with the beſt company*, even ſuch whereof there is *moſt need*, and *beſt uſe*. While God and you walk together, you have an advantage above all that walk not with him; for you have a bleſſed opportunity of that *holy acquaintance* with God, which is expreſſed Job xxii. 21, 30. You have opportunity to *ſpeak* unto him, praying with aſſurance of a *gracious hearing*. *Abraham* and his faithful ſervant made uſe of their walking with God for *theſe* purpoſes, Gen. xxiv. Is it not a ſpecial favour that the moſt high God whoſe throne is in Heaven, ſhould condeſcend to walk on earth with ſinful man, nay, rather to call up man from Earth to Heaven to walk with him? Phil. iii. 20. Coloſ. iii. 2. It would be therefore ſhameful ingratitude not to accept this offer, and not to obey this charge.

Sixthly, *To ſet the Lord always in your ſight, is an excellent preſervative and reſtraint from ſin.* With this ſhield *Joſeph* did repel and quench the fiery darts of the temptations of his deſigning

Miſtreſs, Gen. xxxix. 9. For who is ſo fooliſh, and ſhameleſs, as wilfully to tranſgreſs the juſt laws of a Father, King, and Judge, knowing that he is preſent, and obſerves him with deteſtation, if he ſo do

Seventhly, *To ſet the Lord always before you*, Pſal. cxxix. 168. is an excellent *remedy againſt ſpiritual ſloth and negligence in duties*, and it is *a ſharp ſpurr to quicken, and make you diligent and abundant in the work of the Lord.* What ſervant can be ſlothful and careleſs in his Maſters *ſight?* And what Maſter will keep a Servant that will not obſerve him, and do his commands while he himſelf *looketh on?*

Eighthly, *Walking with God in manner aforeſaid*, doth exceedingly *pleaſe God*, Heb. xi. 5. It alſo *pleaſes* GOD's holy *Angels*, 1 Cor. xi. 10. It *pleaſes* GOD's faithful *Miniſters*, 3 John 4. and doth *pleaſe and ſtrengthen all the good people of God*, Pſal. cxix. 75. with whom you do converſe. It is to walk worthy of *God in all well pleaſing*, Coloſ. i. 9, 10.

Ninthly, *Thus walking with God*, you ſhall be aſſured of *God's mercy and gracious favour.* He keepeth *covenant and mercy with all his ſervants, that walk before him with all their heart*, 1 Kings viii. 23. When you do thus walk in the light, you have a gracious fellowſhip with GOD, and *the blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth you from all ſin*, 1 John i. 7. There is no *condemnation* to you which thus walk, Rom. viii. 2. Your fleſh when you die ſhall reſt in hope. For to them that

that ſet GOD before them he doth *ſhew the path of Life*, which will bring them into his glorious preſence, where are *fulneſs of joys and pleaſures for evermore*, Pſal. xvi. to ver. 12.

Any one of theſe motives, ſeriouſly thought upon by an humble Chriſtian, is enough to perſwade him to this holy walking with GOD.

Notwithſtanding, it is ſad to conſider, how few there be which *walk* thus. For moſt men *ſeek not after God, God is not in all their thoughts*, Pſal. x. 4. they walk in the *vanity of their minds*, Eph. iv. 17. *after their own luſts*, 2 Pet. iii. 3. the *luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye*, and *the pride of life*, 1 Jo. ii. 16. walking according to the *courſe of this world*, according to the will of Satan, the *Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. ii. 2. the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience. Who refuſe to return, or to call themſelves into queſtion concerning their ways, though GOD doth wait and hearken for it, no, not ſo much as to ſay, *What have we done?* Jer. viii. 6. But every one runneth to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle.

Now concerning all that *walk thus contrary unto God*, GOD hath ſaid that he will *ſet his face againſt them, and puniſh them ſeven times*, Lev. xxvi. 21 to 28. even with many and ſore plagues. And if yet they will walk contrary to him, he *will walk contrary to them in fury, and puniſh them ſeven times more for their ſins.* And if yet they will walk in impenitency, notwithſtanding *God's* offer of mercy to them in *Chriſt*, St. *Paul* could

not ſpeak of ſuch with dry eyes, but peremptorily pronounceth that their *end is deſtruction*, Phil. iii. 18, 19.

Weigh well, therefore, theſe premiſes; compare the *way*, wherein you walk with GOD, with all other *ways*; compare *company* with all *other company*, and *the iſſues and end of this way* with *the iſſues and end of all other ways*: and the proper choice of your *walk* will eaſily and quickly be made.

Thus much may be ſaid in *general* of walking with GOD.

§. 3. *Walking with GOD, to be Conſtant and Univerſal.*

THE *Commandment* to walk with GOD *is indefinite*, without limitation, therefore muſt be underſtoood to be a walking with him *in all things*, and that *in all things*, and, *at all times*, in *all companies*, and in *all changes*, *conditions*, *and eſtates* of your life whatſoever. To walk with GOD in general and at large is not ſufficient.

You are not diſpenſed with for any moment of your life; but *all the days* of your life, and *each day* of your life, and *each hour* of that day, and *each minute* of that hour; you muſt paſs *the time*, 1 Pet. i. 17. the *whole time* of your dwelling here in fear; even *all the day long* ſaith *Solomon*, Pro. xxiii. 17. You muſt endeavour to have a conſcience void of offence *always*, Acts xxiv.

xxiv. 16. You muſt live the *reſt of your life*, 1 Pet. iv. 2. not to the luſts of men, but to the will of God, Heb. iii. 12. taking heed leaſt at *any time* there be in you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living GOD.

1. For this end Chriſt did *redeem* you from the hands of your enemies, that you might ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs (which is the ſame with walking with GOD) *all the days of your life* without fear, Luke i. 74, 75.

2. The end of the *inſtructions* of GOD's Word, which is the light to your feet in this walking, is, that it be bound upon your heart *continually* to lead, keep, and converſe with you *at all times*, Pro. vi. 21, 22.

3. The *luſts* of your own heart, and your adverſary the devil lye *always* upon the advantage to hinder you in, or divert you from this godly courſe, 1 Pet. v. 8. ſo that, upon every intermiſſion of your holy care to pleaſe GOD, they take their opportunity to ſurpriſe you.

4. You are accountable unto GOD for loſing and miſpending *all that precious time* wherein you do not walk in his ways, Eph. v. 16.

5. Beſides, he that hath much work to do, or that is in a long journey, or is running a race for a wager, hath no need to loſe *any time*. If you be long obſtructed in your Chriſtian work and race by ſin and ſloth, you will hardly recover your loſs but with much ſorrow, with renewed faith, and with more than ordinary repentance.

Wherefore, when you awake in the night, or in the morning, and while you are employed in the day, and when you betake yourſelf to ſleep at night, you muſt, as *David*, have thoughts on GOD, and *ſet him always before you*, Pſal. xvi. 8. Acts ii. 25. *When I awake, I am ſtill with thee*, ſaith he, Pſal. xxxix. 18. and *in the night he remembered God*, Pſal. lxiii. 6. and *his hope and meditation was on God's word*, Pſal. cxix. 147. 148. And *Iſaiah* (in the perſon of all the faithful) ſaith, *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early*, Iſa. xxvi. 9.

CHAP. II.

Of Beginning the Day with GOD.

§. 1. *How to Awake, with GOD.*

1. IN the *inſtant of awaking* let your heart be lifted up to GOD with a *thankful acknowledgement* of his mercy to you. For it is he that giveth his *beloved ſleep*, Pſal. cxxvii. 2. who keepeth you both in ſoul and body *while you ſleep*, Pro. vi. 22. Who reneweth his *mercies every morning*, Lam. 22, 23. For, while you ſleep, you are as it were out of actual poſſeſſion of yourſelf, and all things elſe. Now, it was GOD that kept you, and all that you had, and reſtored them again with many new mercies when you awaked

2. Ariſe

2. Ariſe *early in the morning* (if you be not neceſſarily hindered) following the example of our *Saviour Chriſt*, John viii. 2. and of the *good matron* in the *Proverbs*, Pro. xxxi. 15. For this will uſually much conduce to the *health* of your body, and the Proſperity, both of your temporal, and ſpiritual ſtate; for hereby you will have the day before you, and will gain the beſt, and the fitteſt times for the exerciſes of Religion, and for the works of your calling.

3. In the time *betwixt your awaking and ariſing* (if other ſuitable thoughts offer not themſelves) it will be uſeful to think upon ſome of theſe, *I muſt awake from the ſleep of Sin to Righteouſneſs*, Eph. v. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 34. as well as out of *bodily ſleep unto lahour in my calling*. *The night is far ſpent, the day is at hand, I muſt therefore caſt off the works of darkneſs, and put on the armour of light*, Rom. xiii. 11, 12, 13. *I muſt walk honeſtly as in the day*. I am by the *light of grace and knowledge, to ariſe and walk in it*, as well as *by the light of the Sun to walk by it*. Think alſo of your *awaking* out of the *ſleep of death*, and out of *the grave*, 1 Cor. xv. 55. at the ſound of the *laſt Trumpet*, 1 Theſ. iv. 16. even of your bleſſed *reſurrection unto glory* at the laſt day. It was one of *David's* ſweet thoughts (ſpeaking to GOD) *When I awake, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs*, Iſa. xvii. 15.

4. When you *ariſe, and dreſs yourſelf*, loſe not that precious time (when your mind is freſheſt) with impertinent and fruitleſs thoughts, as

is the cuſtom of too many to do. This is a fit time to think upon the *cauſe* why you have need of apparel; namely, the *fall* and *ſin* of your firſt Parents, which from them is derived to you. For before their fall *their nakedneſs was their comelineſs*, Gen. i. 31. and ſeeing it, they *were not aſhamed*, Gen. ii. 25. It will likewiſe be to good purpoſe to conſider what *matters* the wiſe providence of GOD hath appointed to be the ſubſtance of your apparel. The *rinds* of plants, the *ſkins*, *hair*, or *wool* of brute beaſts, and the *bowels* of the ſilkworm; the very *excrements* and *ſuperfluous apparel of unreaſonable creatures*. Which, as it doth magnify the wiſdom, power, and goodneſs of GOD, in chooſing, and turning ſuch mean things to ſuch excellent uſe: ſo it ſhould humble and ſurpreſs the *pride of man*. For what man in his ſenſes, would be proud of the badge of his ſhame, even of that apparel, for which (under GOD) he is beholden even to *plants* and *beaſts?*

Now alſo is a good time to call to mind what *rules* are to be obſerved, that you may dreſs yourſelf as becometh one that profeſſeth godlineſs: namely, 1. That your *apparel for matter* and *faſhion* do ſuit with your *general* and *ſpecial calling*, 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. and with your *eſtate*, *ſex*, and *age*, Deu. xxiii. 5.

2. That your *apparel* be conſiſtent with *health* and *comelineſs*, 1 Cor. xi 14, 15. 1 Cor. xii. 23.

3. That you rather go with the *loweſt*, than with the *higheſt* of your ſtate and place.

4. That

4. That the *faſhion* be neither *ſtrange*, *immodeſt*, *ſingular*, or *ridiculous*, Zeph. i. 8.

5. That you be not *over curious*, or *over long*, taking up too much time in putting it on.

6. Neither the *making* or *wearing* of your apparel muſt ſavour of *pride*, *lightneſs*, *curioſity*, *laſciviouſneſs*, *prodigality*, or *baſe covetouſneſs*, Iſa. iii. 18, to 24. But it muſt be ſuch as becometh *holineſs*, *wiſdom*, and *honeſty*, and ſuch as is well *reported of*, Phil. iv. 8. 1 Cor. xi.

7. Follow the *example* of thoſe of your rank and means, which are moſt *ſober*, moſt *frugal*, and *moſt diſcreet*.

While you dreſs yourſelf, it will be ſeaſonable and profitable alſo, by this occaſion, to *raiſe your thoughts*, Rev. iii. 18. and *fix them upon that apparel which doth cloath and adorn your inward man*, 1 Pet. iii. 4. which is ſpiritual, and of a divine matter, which never is out of faſhion, which never weareth out, but is always better for the wearing. Think thus, if I go *naked* without bodily apparel, it will be to the *ſhame of my perſon*, and to the *hazard of my health and life:* But how much more will the *guilty nakedneſs* of my ſoul appear to the eyes of *men*, of *Angels*, and of *God himſelf*, Rev. iii. 17. Rev. xvi. 15. Exod. xxxii. 25. whoſe *pure eyes* cannot abide filthineſs, Hab. i. 13. whereby my *ſoul* will be expoſed to moſt *deadly temptations*, and myſelf to God's moſt *ſevere judgments*; except I have *put on* and do *keep on* me the *white linnen of Chriſt's Spouſe*, *the righteouſneſs of the Saints*, Rev. xix. 8. that is,

juſtification

juſtification by faith in Chriſt, and *ſanctification by the Spirit of Chriſt?*

And becauſe every day you will be *aſſaulted* with the *world*, the *fleſh*, and the *devil*, you will do well to conſider whether you have put on and do improve *your coat of mail*, that *compleat armour*, preſcribed Eph. vi. 11—18.

When you uſe your *looking glaſs*, Jam. i. 23, 24, 25. and by experience find that it ſerveth to diſcover, and to direct you how to *reform* whatever is uncomely, and out of order in your body: you may hereby remember *yourſelf* of the neceſſity and admirable uſe of the *glaſs of God's Word*, and *Goſpel of Chriſt*, both *read* and *preached*, for the good of your ſoul. For, this being underſtood, and believed, doth *not only* ſhew what is *amiſs* in the ſoul, and how it may be *amended*; but in ſome meaſure will enable you to amend; for, it doth not only ſhew you your own face, but the very face and glory of GOD in Chriſt Jeſus, which by reflexion upon you will, through the Spirit, work *on you* a more excellent effect than *on Moſes face* in the Mount; Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30. which yet was ſo glorious, that the people could not endure to behold it. For *by this glory of God*, which by faith you behold in the Word, you will be *changed into the ſame Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Concerning theſe things which I have directed to be thought upon, when you *ariſe*, and put on your *apparel* in the morning, and thoſe which

I ſhall

I ſhall direct when you put off your apparel at night; my meaning is not to urge them as *neceſſary*, is if it were ſin to omit any of theſe particulars: but to be uſed, except better come in place, as moſt convenient.

§. 2. *Of Beginning the Day with GOD, by renewed Faith and Repentance.*

(1.) WHEN you are thus awake, and are riſen out of your bed, that you may walk with GOD the *remainder* of the day: It will be needful that you *firſt renew your peace with God*, by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and then endeavour to ſhew your dutifulneſs and gratitude to GOD, by doing thoſe works of *piety*, *equity*, *mercy*, and *ſobriety*, which may any way concern you that day. For *how can two walk together, except they be agreed?* Amos iii. 3. And how can any walk with GOD, if he be not *holy* in all his converſation? You have as much cauſe to *beware of him*, and *to obey his voice* and not provoke him *who goeth before you in the wilderneſs of this world*, to guide and bring you to his *heavenly kingdom*, Exod. xxiii. 20, 21, 22. as the *Iſraelites* had, to beware of him who went before them to keep them in the way, and to conduct them unto *the earthly Canaan*, the place which he had promiſed and prepared for them. It was for this, that *Joſhua* told the people, that except they would *fear the Lord and ſerve him in ſincerity, and put away their ſtrange gods, they could not ſerve God*,

Joſh.

Joſh. xxiv. 14, 19. they could not walk with him. For he is (ſaith he) *a holy God:* He is a *jealous God: He will not forgive your tranſgreſſions, nor your ſins.*

(3.) For this cauſe (if unavoidable neceſſity hinder not) *Begin* the day with *ſolemn prayer and thankſgiving*, Pſa. xcii. 1, 2. Pſa. lxxxviii. 13. Before which (that theſe duties may be the better performed) it will be convenient, if you have time, that you *prepare yourſelf by meditation*, Lam. iii. 40, 41. Job xi. 13. the *matter* whereof ſhould be an enquiry into your *preſent* ſtate, how all things ſtand between GOD and you. How you have behaved ſince you *laſt prayed*, and renewed your peace with GOD. What ſins you have committed, what graces and benefits you want, *what freſh favours God hath beſtowed on you*, Pſa. cxvi. 1 to 13. ſince laſt you gave him this tribute of thanks; and how much praiſe and thanks you owe to him alſo for the continuance of former bleſſings. Think alſo what *employments* you ſhall have that day in which you may need his ſpecial Grace and Aſſiſtance—Conſider likewiſe what ground and warrant you have to approach to the Throne of Grace, to aſk pardon, and to hope for favour and help of GOD. Upon theſe conſiderations, you muſt ſeriouſly and faithfully endeavour in the ſtrength of Chriſt (without whom you can do nothing) to *reform whatſoever you find to be amiſs*, Job xi. 14. flying unto, and only relying upon GOD's mercy in Chriſt; to acknowledge him in all things; and that you will now ſeek grace, and help of him,

him, whereby you may walk as in his ſight in all well pleaſing, all that day.

To aſſiſt you therein, do thus,

Firſt, lay a ſtrict charge upon your *conſcience* to deal *impartially*, *plainly*, and *fully* in this examination and judging of yourſelf.

Secondly, you ſhould be ſo well acquainted with the *ſubſtance and meaning of God's holy Law*, Deut. vi. 8, 9. that you may be able to carry in your head a *Catalogue* or *Table* of the Duties required, and Vices forbidden, in each Commandment; whereby you may try your Obedience *paſt*, and may ſet before you a Rule of Life for *Time to come*.

Thirdly, (leaſt the calling to mind the multitude and greatneſs of your ſins ſhould make you deſpair of GOD's favour) you ſhould be ſo well inſtructed in the *Chriſtian Faith*, and in the principal *Promiſes of the Goſpel*, that you may be able alſo quickly to call them to mind, for the ſtrengthening of your Faith and Hope in GOD. The *Form of ſound Words* in the Goſpel, 2 Tim. i. 13. ſhould be familiar unto you for theſe Purpoſes.

All this need not take up much Time: you will find it to be Time well redeemed. For, firſt, by ſuch *Preparation* you will keep yourſelf from that *rude* and *irreverent* thruſting yourſelf into GOD's holy Preſence, whereof you are warned in the Scriptures, Eccle. v. 1, 2.

Secondly, when by this *means* your heart is well humbled, ſoftened, and ſet right towards GOD,

God, ſo that you can ſay, you *regard no iniquity* in your heart, Pſa. lxvi. 18. John ix. 31. and when hereby you have *called in* your thoughts from ſtraggling, and have gotten compoſedneſs of mind, and inward ſtrength of ſoul, (without which the arrow of prayer can never fly home to the mark) then you may approach unto God's ſpecial preſence with more *faith* and *boldneſs*; you ſhall be more able to utter before him *apt confeſſions*, *lawful requeſts*, and *due thankſgivings*, more *underſtandingly*, more *humbly*, more *feelingly*, more *fervently*, and with more *aſſurance of a gracious hearing*, (all which are requiſite in prayer) then poſſibly you could ever be able to do without ſuch *preparation*.

Thirdly, this *due preparation to prayer* doth not only fit you to pray; but is *an excellent furtherance to an holy life*. For it maketh the *conſcience tender* and *watchful*, by the daily exerciſe of the knowledge of the precepts and threats of the Law, and of the precepts and promiſes of the Goſpel: And it being enforced to examine, accuſe, judge, and paſs ſentence, and do a kind of execution upon you for *your ſin*; ſmiting your heart, and wounding it with godly fear, grief, and ſhame (a work to which the conſcience is loth to come, till it muſt needs;) wherefore to prevent all this trouble, and ſmart, it will rather give all diligence in *other acts* which are more pleaſing; namely, it will direct you in the ways of God, check and warn you before-hand, leaſt you ſhould ſin; to the end that when you

come

come to examine yourſelf again, it might find matter, not of grieving and tormenting; but of rejoicing and comforting your heart, which is the *moſt proper*, and *moſt pleaſing work of a ſanctified conſcience*, 2 Cor. i. 12. He that knoweth that he muſt be at much pains to make himſelf whole and clean when he is wounded and defiled, will take the *more heed* leaſt he wound and defile himſelf.

Fourthly, this due preparation to prayer, by *examining*, *judging* and *reforming* yourſelf, doth *prevent God's judging of you*; for when you *judge yourſelf, you ſhall not be judged of the Lord*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. xi. 31.

(3.) Being rightly *prepared*, you muſt draw near into GOD's ſpecial preſence, falling low at his footſtool, Pſa. xcv. 6. repreſenting him to your thoughts as one who is in himſelf, and of himſelf, the *only heavenly, all-knowing, and all-mighty Majeſty*, Mat. vi. 9. now become *your loving and merciful Father, through Chriſt* his Son *your Lord*. Then you muſt pour out your ſouls before him in confeſſing your ſins, 1 Sam. i. 15. and in making your deſires, *(through the ſpirit)* known unto him in the name of *Chriſt*, for yourſelf and others in all lawful petitions, and ſupplications, with thankſgiving, Phil. iv. 6. and all this with *underſtanding*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. with the *intention* and full bent of the ſoul, Jam. v. 16. and *expectation* of being heard, Mark xi. 24. in due time and meaſure, and in the beſt manner.

§. 3. *Further*

§. 3. *Further Directions concerning Prayer.*

UNTO the directions both for *preparation* to prayer, and concerning *prayer itſelf*, take theſe cautions.

Firſt (if it may be) *omit neither the one nor the other*, and let them be the *firſt work after you are up*, Pſa. v. 3. But if that cannot be, becauſe of ſome neceſſary hindrance, yet perform them ſo *ſoon as you can*, and *as well as you can:* though you can do neither, either ſo ſoon, or ſo well *as you would*, yet omit them not altogether. Break thorough all *ſeeming neceſſities*, which will daily come in your way to hinder and thruſt out theſe duties. The *Devil*, knowing that nothing doth undermine and overthrow his kingdom more than theſe duly performed; knowing alſo that this ſpiritual performance of them is tedious to corrupt nature, he will thruſt upon you *ſeeming neceſſities*, ſo many, and ſo often, that if you be not watchful to gain, and to take time, breaking thorough all ſuch hinderances as are not truly neceſſary; you will oftimes by the circumvention of the fleſh, and of the Devil, be brought to an omiſſion of *Preparation*, or *Prayer*, or both. Upon which will follow the ſame temptations, together with a proneneſs to the like neglect, and a greater indiſpoſition to theſe duties afterward.

Secondly, *lay not too great a taſk upon yourſelf in this Preparation to Prayer*, I mean, ſo much as

as will take up more time than the works of your calling, and other needful affairs will permit; but contrive and huſband your time ſo, that every *lawful buſineſs* may have his *own time*, Eccl. iii. 1. God hath ſubordinated the works of your general and particular calling in ſuch ſort, that uſually, the one ſhall not obſtruct the other for it, *&c.*

If through taking *too much time* in preparation to prayer, and in prayer, either of them grow neceſſarily tedious and burthenſome; *Satan will circumvent you* by this means, cauſing you out of a true wearineſs of *too much* (even before you are aware) to omit them all together.

Thirdly, whereas when you prepare yourſelf to pray, and when you do pray, it is lawful to think of your *worldly buſineſs*, to the end that you might pray for direction and for good ſucceſs therein; (for you may aſk your *daily bread*) Mat. vi. 11. you muſt *take heed* when you think of theſe things, that your thoughts be not *worldly* through *diſtempers* and *diſtractions* about the ſame, Luke xii. 29. For theſe will abate your ſpirituality and fervour in prayer, and will ſhut the ears of God againſt your prayer.

§. 4. *Signs of Worldly-Mindedneſs in Devotion, and Remedies againſt it.*

IF you deſire to know the *ſigns* and *remedies* of *diſtempers* and *diſtractions about worldly things in your preparation for holy duties.* By *diſtempers*, I mean,

I mean, *inordinate trouble about the means*, and by *diſtractions*, I mean a *vexing trouble* about ſucceſs.

I. as to the *Signs* of it. You may know that your mind is diſtempered with *worldlineſs* (even in thinking on lawfull buſineſs) when you prepare yourſelf to prayer, and at other ſeaſons, by theſe marks.

1. When (except in caſe of neceſſity in their apparent danger) your worldly affairs are *firſt in your thoughts* to be the matter of your meditation. For thoughts how to *hallow God's name*, and how his *kingdom may come*, and how you may *do his will*, ſhould uſually be in your mind, before thoſe that concern *your daily bread.*

2. When they *interpoſe* themſelves, *interrupt*, and *joſtle out* thoſe *good thoughts* whereon you were thinking, before that you have thought of them ſufficiently.

3. When your thoughts of worldly buſineſs are with *greater intention of mind*, than the thoughts of things ſpiritual and heavenly.

4. When they *laſt longer* than ſuch as immediately concern the glory of GOD, and the good of your ſoul; or hold you too long upon them.

5. You may know it by the *ends* which you propoſe to yourſelf in your thoughts of worldly buſineſs; are the *ends* you propoſe, only, or chiefly that you may prevent poverty, or that you may have wherewith to ſatisfy your natural deſires? If you propoſe not *other*, *and more ſpiritual ends*, your thoughts of them at that time,

are

are *worldly*: But if your thoughts of your worldly buſineſs, be to the end that you may lay them to the rule of GOD's Word, that you may *not offend* him in your labour and care about them; or that you might crave GOD's *direction* and *bleſſing* upon your ſaid care and labour; you being ſpiritual in thoughts of worldly buſineſs; then your thoughts of lawful buſineſs are not diſtempered with worldlineſs.

II. To *remedy* theſe diſtempered thoughts; 1ſt. get a *ſound and clear judgment* to diſcern what is good, what is bad; alſo what is beſt, and what is leaſt good; prefering things ſpiritual, heavenly and eternal, incomparably before thoſe which are earthly and temporal. Make thoſe beſt things *your treaſure*, Mat. vi. 21. then your *heart will be chiefly ſet*, and your thoughts will *chiefly run on them*: and will be moderate in thinking of thoſe things which are leſs needful.

2. Do as a wiſe *Counſellor at Law*, or as a *Maſter of Requeſts*, who muſt hear many *Clients*, and receive and anſwer many *Petitions*. Conſider whoſe *turn* it is, and what is the moſt important ſuit; and diſpatch them firſt. Let thoughts of worldly buſineſs be ſhut out, and made to ſtand at the door, till their turn come to be thought upon, and let the more *excellent*, and more *needful* be diſpatched firſt.

3. If thoughts of the world will impudently intrude themſelves, and will not be kept out; *rebuke* them ſharply; give them no hearing, but diſhearten them, and rebuke the porter and keeper

er of the door of your heart, that is, *ſmite, wound* and *check your conſcience*, becauſe it did not check and reſtrain them.

4. In all lawful buſineſs, *innure* yourſelf *fully* and *ſufficiently to intend that one thing which you have in hand for the preſent*, Eccl. ix. 10. and at all times reſtrain wandering thoughts as much as may be. Let your *Reaſon* get ſuch power over *Phantiſy*, that you may be able to think of what you pleaſe, when you pleaſe. You will ſay, to a fickle mind this is hard, if not impoſſible. To this I anſwer, if you would not nouriſh and entertain evil, flying, and unſeaſonable thoughts when they *ariſe*; and would (as often as they offer themſelves) be much *diſpleaſed* with them, and with yourſelf for them; then in time you will find it poſſible, and not exceeding hard to think of what *good* things you would, and not of what *evil* things you would not.

5. Laſtly, when the time of thinking and doing of your worldly buſineſs is come, then think thereof *ſufficiently*, and *to good purpoſe*; for then they will be the leſs troubleſome in thruſting themſelves in *out of place*, becauſe it is known that *in their place*, they ſhall be fully regarded. Idleneſs and improvidence about theſe things, puts a man into ſtraights many times, and into diſtempers about his worldly buſineſs, more then elſe needs, or would be.

If you would alſo know *when* your thoughts of *ſucceſs* in your worldly affairs are evil, together with a *remedy* againſt them.

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To think, that, if you be *not prudent* and *diligent* in your calling, and, that if GOD do *not bleſs* your diligence, you may do the works of your calling in vain, and may expect ill ſucceſs; thus to think is lawful and uſeful. For it will excite in you a reſolution to be frugal and diligent; and when you have done all you can, theſe thoughts alſo will quicken you to prayer unto GOD for ſucceſs. But if your thoughts of thriving, or not thriving, be other then theſe, and bring forth other effects; namely, if deſire of ſucceſs drive you to think of uſing *unlawful means*, from doubting that you cannot ſo *ſoon*, or ſo *certainly*, or not *at all*, *ſpeed* by the uſe of *lawful* only: If it make you full of anxiety and fear, that though you uſe what good *means* you can, all will be in *vain:* If you be yet *doubtful* and *take anxious thought* about what you ſhall eat, what you ſhall drink, and what you ſhall put on, or how you and yours ſhall live another day, then your thoughts about ſucceſs in worldly buſineſs, are *worldly*, and *diſtractful.*

I ſhall ſpeak to this *ſin* with its *remedy* more fully when I write againſt *taking care* in any thing.

Yet for the preſent, know: All the fruit you will reap from unbelieving fears and diſtruſt, doubts of ſucceſs, &c. will be nothing elſe, but a *farther degree* of vexation of heart. For all the anxiety in the world cannot bring *good* ſucceſs. Beſides, nothing provoketh the Lord to give

give *ill ſucceſs* ſooner, then when you nouriſh diſtruſtful care.

Secondly, conſider the *power* and *faithfulneſs* of GOD, who hath taken care of the ſucceſs of your labour upon himſelf: commanding you not to *care*, but to *caſt all the care on him*, 1 Pet. v. 7. If you would reſt upon this, you might be ſecure of good ſucceſs in your *outward* ſtate, even according to your deſire; or elſe GOD will more then recompence the want thereof, by cauſing you to thrive, and to have good *ſucceſs* in *ſpiritual* things, which is *much better*, and which you ſhould deſire *much more*.

4. A fourth caution to be obſerved in your preparation to prayer, and in prayer, is, be *not ſlight* and *formal* herein, which is, when curſorily and out of cuſtom only you call your ſins, your duties, GOD's favours and his promiſes unto a bare and fruitleſs remembrance. For if the *heart* be not ſeriouſly *affected* with *anger*, *fear*, *grief* and *ſhame for ſin*. And if it be not *affected* with a thankful, *acknowledgement of being beholding to God* for his favours. Moreover, if it be not *affected* with *hope* and *confidence in God* at the remembrance of his bleſſed promiſes. And if withal, the *heart* be not gained to a *renewed reſolution* to reform what is faulty, and to *cry earneſtly to God* for grace and mercy; and for the time to come to *endeavour* to live a godly life; all your *preparation* is nothing. Nay, this ſlight and *fruitleſs calling of ſin and duty to remembrance*, and no more, is a great *emboldner* and *ſtrengthener of ſin*;

ſin; and a great *weakener and quencher of the Spirit.* For ſins are like to idle vagrants, and lawleſs ſubjects; if officers call ſuch before them, and, either ſay *nothing* to them, or *only* give them threatening words: but do not ſmite them and make them ſmart, they grow ten times more bold, inſolent, and lawleſs. Good thoughts are like to dutiful ſervants and loyal ſubjects, ſuch as are ready to come at every call, and offer themſelves to be employed in all good ſervices: now if ſuch be *not entertained* with ſuitable regard, if they be not cheriſhed in their readineſs, they (like *David's* people) return diſ-heartened, and their edge to future ſervice is taken off, 2 Sam. xix. 3. Beſides, this *curſory* performing of holy duties, is the highway to an habit of *hypocriſy*, that accurſed bane of all that's good.

5. My laſt caution is, that if in your meditations, and in your prayers, you find a *dulneſs* and want of *ſpiritualneſs*, I would have you to be humbled in the ſenſe of your impotency and infirmity; yet, *be not diſcouraged, nor give them over:* but rather betake yourſelf to theſe duties with more diligence and earneſtneſs. When you want water, (your *pump* being dry) you by pouring in a little water, and much labour in *pumping*, can fetch water; ſo, by *much labouring* the heart in preparation, and by *prayer*, you may recover the gift of prayer, Luke xi. And, as when your fire is out, by laying on fuel, and by blowing the ſpark remaining, you kindle it again: ſo by meditation you *ſtir up the*

grace that is in you, 2 Tim. i. 6. and by the breath of prayer, may revive and inflame the ſpirit of grace and prayer in you. Yet, if you find that you have *not time* to prepare by meditation; or having done ſo, if you find a *confuſion* and *diſtraction* in your meditation, then it will be beſt to break through all hinderances, and without *further* preparation attend to the duty of prayer, only with premeditation of GOD *to* whom, and of Chriſt *by* whom, through the Spirit, you muſt pray.

If for all this you do not find ſatisfaction in theſe holy exerciſes, yet *give them not over:* for GOD is many times beſt pleaſed with your ſervices, when, through an humble ſenſe of your failings, you are diſpleaſed with yourſelf for them. Yet more, if when you have wreſtled and ſtriven with GOD and your own heart in prayer, you are forced to go *halting away with Jacob*, Gen. xxxii. 25, 31. in the ſenſe of your infirmities, yet be not diſcouraged, for it is a good ſign that you have prevailed with GOD as *Jacob* did, Gen. xxxii. 28.

GOD uſeth, when he is overcome by prayer, to work in them that do overcome ſome ſenſe of weakneſs, to let them know, that they prevail with him in prayer, not by any ſtrength of *their own*, or by any worthineſs of their prayer, when they have prayed beſt; but from the goodneſs of GOD's *free grace*, from the worthineſs of Chriſt's *interceſſion*, by whom they offer up their prayers; and from the truth of his *promiſe* made unto them

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that pray. If it were not thus, many, when they have their hearts desire in prayer, would ascribe all to the *goodness of their prayers*, and not to the free grace of GOD; and would be proud of their own strength, which in truth is none at all.

CHAP. III.

Directions for Walking with GOD, in the Progress of the Day.

§. 1. WHEN you have thus *begun* the day by prayer by yourself, seeking peace with GOD through Jesus Christ, and craving his gracious presence to be with you, and for you, that day: you must then conscionably, according to the nature of the day (be it one of the *six days*, or the *Lord's day*) apply yourself to the business of that day, whether it be in *acts of Religion*, or of your *personal calling*, or in any other works belonging unto you, as you are *superior* or *inferior* in Family, Church, or Commonwealth; doing all as in GOD's sight.

And because all lawful business is *sanctified by the Word and Prayer*, 1 Tim. iv. 5. and it is part of your calling (if you are Master of a Family) to govern your Children and Servants in the fear of GOD, and to teach them to live godly; therefore it is your duty to take the fittest time in the morning to call them together, and

pray with them; before which prayer, it will be profitable to read the *Scripture* in order, with due reverence, taking all opportunities, in fit times, to inſtruct them in the principles of Religion, often *preſſing the word upon them*, Deut. vi. 7.

If it be a *working day*, with chearfulneſs and diligence, attend to the *work* of your *particular calling*. For whoſoever hath *no calling* whereby he may be profitable to the ſociety of man in Family, Church, or Common-wealth: or having a lawful calling doth not follow it, he liveth *inordinately*, 2 Theſ. iii. 10, 11. GOD never made any man for *play*, or to *do nothing*. And whatſoever a man doth, he muſt do it by virtue of his Chriſtian calling, receiving warrant from it, elſe he cannot do it in faith; *without which no man can pleaſe God*, Heb. xi. 6. Beſides, whoſoever is called to Chriſtianity, hath no way to heaven but by walking with GOD in his *perſonal*, and *particular* calling, as well as in his *general* calling, 1 Cor. vii. 17, 24.

1. That you may do this, firſt, be ſure that the thing where-about you labour, either with head, or hand, be *lawful* and *good*.

2. Be *diligent* and *induſtrious*, Eph. iv. 28. for the ſluggard and idle perſon deſireth, but hath nothing: but the diligent hand maketh rich, Pro. xiii. 4.

3. Let there be *truth*, *plainneſs*, and *equity* in all your dealings with men, Prov. x. 4. *Circumvent and defraud no man*, 1 Theſ. iv. 6.

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Make not your own gain the weight and meaſure to trade by. I will propoſe to you ſealed weights and rules, according to which, you muſt converſe with all men.

(1.) Conſider your *neighbour's good* as well as *your own.* Weigh impartially with yourſelf what proportionable advantage (in common eſtimation) your neighbour is like to have for that which you receive of him. For you muſt *love your neighbour as yourſelf*, Mat. xxii. 39. In whatſoever you have to do with men, you muſt not look only to your *own* advantage, but to the benefit alſo of *your neighbour*, Phil. ii. 4.—Obſerve therefore the *Royal Law*, the *Standard* of all equity in this kind: *Whatſoever you* (with a rectified judgment and honeſt heart) *would that men ſhould do unto you, do you even ſo unto them: for this is the Law and the Prophets*, Mat. vii. 12.

3. Be *watchful* that you let not ſlip your *opportunities* of lawful advantage, Prov. vi. 6, 7, 8. and take heed leaſt in theſe evil times you be *circumvented* by fraud, and falſhood, and be inſnared by unneceſſary *Suretiſhip*, Prov. xi. 15. Prov. xxii. 26. Pro. vi. 1, to 6.

Whereas in every calling there is a *myſtery*, and for the moſt part each calling and condition of life hath its *ſpecial ſin* or *ſins*, which the Devil and Cuſtom, for gain or credit ſake amongſt evil men, hath made to ſeem *lawful*; yea hath put a kind of *neceſſity* upon it, which cannot be ſhuned without expoſing a man's ſelf to cenſure: Look narrowly therefore by the light of

God's Word, and by experience, to *find out* that or thoſe ſins, and then be as careful to avoid them.

§. 2. *Concerning Superiors and Inferiors.*

THERE are other works alſo, ſuch as concern you as you are a *ſuperior*, and in authority; or as you are *inferior* and ſubject, either in Family, Church, or Common-wealth; in doing which you muſt act for the glory of God, following the directions of his *Word* and *Spirit*.

1. As you are a *Superior*, 1ſt. Walk worthy of all *honour* and *due reſpect*, behaving yourſelf in your place with ſuch holineſs, wiſdom, gravity, juſtice and mercy; obſerving ſuch a medium between too much rigour and remiſſneſs, between ſtraining your authority *too far*, and relaxing it too much, that thoſe under your charge may have cauſe to *fear* and *love you*, Lev. xxv. 43.

2. Wait on your office, and be watchful over your charge, with *all diligence* and *faithfulneſs*; uſing all good means to direct and preſerve them in the duties of *Godlineſs* and *Honeſty*, 1 Tim. ii. 2. which is the only end why God hath ſet you over them. The means are, (1.) Go before them in good *example*. *Examples* of *Superiors* have a kind of conſtraining power, working ſtrongly and inſenſibly upon inferiors. (2.) *Pray* with, and for them, Job i. 5. (3.) Command only things *lawful*, *poſſible*, and *convenient*, and only

only thoſe to which the extent of your *authority* from GOD and man doth allow you. (4.) As much as in you lies, procure for them the *means*, and put them upon the *opportunities* of being, and of *doing good*, Exod. xx. 8, 9, 10. (5.) Prevent likewiſe and remove all occaſions of their *being*, and of *doing evil*. (6.) Protect and defend them, according to your power, from all wrongs and injuries. (7.) When they do well, *encourage* them, by letting them ſee that you take notice as readily of their well-doing, as of their faults; Pſa. ci. 6. and ſo far as is fit, let them have the *praiſe and fruit of their well-doing*, Pro. xxxi. 31. (8.) When they do evil, *rebuke* them more or leſs, according to the nature of their fault: but never with *bitterneſs*, Col. iii. 19, 21. Eph. vi. 9. by railing at, or reviling them, in terms of diſdain, and contempt. There ſhould be always *more ſtrength of reaſon* in your words to convince them of their ſin, and to make them ſee their danger, and to know how to be reformed; *than heat of anger*, in uttering your own diſpleaſure. (9.) If admonitions and words *will reclaim* them, then, proceed not to corrections and blows: but if they *regard not* your reproofs, then according to the nature of the fault, and condition of the perſon, and the limits of your authority, you muſt, in mercy to their ſoul, give them *ſufficient* but *not exceſſive puniſhment*, Pro. xxix. 15, 17, 19. (10.) When you have done thus, and have waited a convenient time for their amendment, but find none; when they

thus declare themſelves to be rebellious, you muſt *ſeek the help of higher authority*, Deut. xxi. 18, 19, 20, 21.

That you *govern* according to theſe directions: Conſider well and often, *firſt*, that thoſe whom you govern, are ſuch whom you muſt not *oppreſs*, neither may you rule over them with *rigour*, Lev. xxv. 39, 43. becauſe they now are, or may be *heirs of the ſame grace together with you*, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

Secondly, Remember often that you have a *ſuperior in heaven*, Eph. vi. 9. Col. iv. 1. that *you* are his *ſervant* and deputy, governing under him; that all your authority is *from him*, and that, at laſt, a time will come when you muſt *give account to him* of your Government.

2. As you are *under authority*, Exo. xx. 12. (1.) you muſt *honour* and reverence all whom GOD hath ſet over you. (2.) You muſt *obey them*, Eph. v. 24. and vi. 1. 5. Heb. xiii. 17. in all ſuch their lawful commands as are within the compaſs of their authority and commiſſion, and that with fidelity, and *ſingleneſs* of heart, for the *Lord's ſake*, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. Eph. vi. 5, 6. (3.) You muſt ſubmit to their reproofs, corrections and juſt reſtraints with patience, without murmuring, *anſwering again*, or *reſiſting*, Tit. ii. 9. For if you do not ſubmit to the powers that be ordained of GOD, or if you *reſiſt* them, Rom. xiii. 2. you rebel againſt GOD, and *reſiſt the ordinance of God:* which who ſo doth, *ſhall receive to himſelf damnation or judgment.* But if you, not only for *wrath*,

wrath, but chiefly for *Conſcience to God*, Rom. xiii. 5. do ſubmit yourſelves to every *ordinance of man*, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. doing therein the *will of God from the heart*, Eph. vi. 6, 7, 8. then, whether men requite you, or not, you ſhall be ſure of the *Lord to receive the reward of the inheritance*, Col. iii. 24. for thus obeying men, *you ſerve the Lord Chriſt*.

§. 3. *Concerning Bodily Refreſhment and Recreations.*

THE conſtitution of mans ſoul and body is ſuch, that they cannot long endure to be employed, and ſtand bent with earneſtneſs upon any thing, without *relaxation* and convenient *refreſhment*.

(Firſt,) The whole man is refreſhed by *eating* and *drinking*: In which you muſt be, firſt *holy*: ſecondly *juſt*, thirdly *temperate*.

1. It was their ſin, who fed themſelves without all *fear of God*, Jude 12. Meats and drinks are not ſanctified to a man, if he be not *pure* and *holy*, Tit. i. 15. 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. and if they be not received with *prayer* and *thankſgiving*.

2. You muſt not eat *bread of deceit*, Prov. xx. 17. 2 Theſ. iii. 12. or ill-gotten food: every man muſt eat his *own bread*, GOD would have no man to eat the *bread of wickedneſs*, nor yet drink the *wine of violence*, Pro. iv. 17.

3. Moreover, you muſt not eat and drink for *gluttony*, and *drunkenneſs*, Rom. xiii. 13. Prov. xxiii. 20,

21. to pleaſe the palate, and to gorge the appetite; but for *health* and *ſtrength*.

(2.) A man when he is weary may be refreſhed likewiſe by *variety* and *interchange* of the duties of his particular, and general calling. Eccl. x. 17. And the *beſt Recreation* to a ſpiritual mind, when it is weary of worldly imployments, is to *walk into Chriſt's garden*, Cant. iv. 12, 13, 14, 15. and v. 1. and there, by reading and *meditating*, Pſa. xciv. 19. ſinging of *Pſalms*, and holy conference, Col. iii. 16. you may ſolace yourſelf with the ſweet comforts of the *holy Spirit*, and enliven your heart with joy in GOD, even *joy in the holy Ghoſt*; and a *delight* in the *Commandments* and *Word of God*, Pſa. cxix. 14, 16, 24. Theſe are the moſt profitable, moſt raviſhing, and moſt laſting delights of all other. And by how much the ſoul is of a more ſpiritual, heavenly conſtitution, by ſo much more it will content, and ſatisfy itſelf in theſe delights.

Yet ſince *bodily* and *natural delights*, are part of our *Chriſtian liberty*, therefore (taking heed that you abuſe not your liberty) you may when you have need, *recreate* yourſelf with them. Now that you may innocently enjoy recreation, follow theſe directions:

1. The matter of your *recreation* muſt be of a *common nature*, and of things of *indifferent* uſe. Things *holy* are too good, and things *vicious* are too bad to be *ſported* or *played with*.

2. Recreations muſt be *ſeaſonable for time*; Not on the *Lord's day*, in which time GOD forbiddeth

biddeth all men to ſeek their *own pleaſures*, Iſa. lviii. 13. Uſually, diverſions muſt be uſed *not before*, but *after* the body or mind hath been thoroughly employed in honeſt buſineſs. Not *over-long* to the expence and loſs of your precious time, which you ſhould ſtudy to *redeem*, not to *trifle away*, Eph. v. 16.

3. Recreations muſt always be *inoffenſive*, 1 Cor. xvi. 14. ſuch as do no harm to yourſelf, and to your *neighbour*. If your diverſions do impeach, or hazard your own, or your neighbours *life*, *eſtate*, or *comfortable living*, they are unlawful.

4. Recreation muſt be *moderate*, not ſenſual or brutiſh; looking at no higher or further end then *earthly delights*. For as he that eateth and drinketh that he may enlarge his appetite, to eat and drink yet more; ſo he that ſporteth that he may ſport, is brutiſh and ſenſual. It is very *Epicuriſm*: *God* hath threatened that he that *loveth ſport, ſhall be a poor man*, Prov. xxi. 17. and he that *loveth wine and oil, ſhall not be rich*.

5. Whatſoever your diverſions be, you muſt recreate the outward man, that you be no *worſe*, but rather *better* in the inward man. For God hath ſet ſuch a bleſſed order in all lawful things, that the meaneſt being lawfully uſed, ſhall not hinder, but aſſiſt us in the beſt things.

6. In all recreations you muſt propoſe the *right end*: the next and immediate end is to revive your weary body, and to quicken your dull mind: but your higheſt and principal end is, that with this refreſhed body and quickened ſpirit,

rit, you may the better ſerve, and *glorify God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. That *whether you eat or drink, or whatſoever you do elſe, all may be done to the glory of God.*

This may ſerve for direction how you ſhould *walk with God* upon any of the *ſix* days, except there be ſpecial cauſe of ſetting a day apart for holy uſe, as, for *faſting* and *prayer*.

CHAP. IV.

Of Religious Faſting.

§. 1. *The Nature of, and Reaſons for Religious Faſting.*

THE *Faſt* which I mentioned in the former Chapter, of which I am now to treat, is a *Religious Faſt*. Which is, *Sanctifying a day to the Lord by a willing abſtinence from meat and drink, from delights and worldly labours, that the whole man may be more thoroughly humbled before God, and more fervent in prayer.*

This *Faſt* hath two parts; the one, *outward*, the chaſtiſing the body; the other, *inward*, the afflicting of the ſoul; under which are contained all thoſe Religious acts which concern the ſeting of the heart right towards GOD, and the ſeeking help of God for thoſe things, for which the *Faſt* is intended.

Take

Take *Faſting* ſtrictly for bodily abſtinence, ſo it is an indifferent thing, and is *no part of God's worſhip:* But take it as it is joined with the *inward* part, and is refered to a *religious end*, being a profeſſion of an extraordinary humiliation; and it is a great aſſiſtance to a man's ſpiritual and reaſonable ſervice of GOD, giving a ſtronger and ſpeedier wing to prayer, which muſt always go with it, Ezra viii. 23. Pſa. xxxv. 13. ſo it is *more then an ordinary worſhip.*

It hath the *name* from the *outward* part; Mark ix. 29. 1 Cor. vii. 5. Acts xiii. 3. it being moſt ſenſible; but hath its excellency and efficacy from the *inward*, being that for which the outward is obſerved.

A Faſt is called *Publick*, when a whole *ſtate*, or when any one *publick Congregation* doth faſt.

Private, when one alone, one family, or ſome few together do faſt.

Publick and private *Faſts* have their warrant from the *New Teſtament*, as well as from the *Old*; which ſheweth that *religious Faſts* were not peculiar to the *Jews*; but are a *Chriſtian Duty*, belonging to all fitly qualified for them.

In the ſacred ſcriptures we have manifold examples of *private Faſts*; and examples and commandment for *publick ones.*

Our *Lord* and *Saviour* ſaid, that his Diſciples after his departure from them ſhould *faſt*; Mat. ix. 15. Mat. vi. 16, 17. and giveth direction unto all concerning *private* faſts. The *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh of huſbands and wives abſtaining from conjugal

conjugal embraces, that they might give themſelves to *faſting and prayer*, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Acts x. 13. And we have repeated examples *of the Apoſtles*, and primitive Chriſtians, for religious *Faſts*, Acts xiii. 2. 3. Acts xiv. 23. All which prove *faſting* to be a *Chriſtian* duty.

The caſe of a perſon's ſelf, or family, the *Church* or *Commonwealth* may be ſuch, that *ordinary* humiliation and prayer will *not ſuffice*. For as there were ſome *Devils* that could not be caſt out, but by *faſting and prayer*, Mat. ix. 29. ſo it may be that ſuch hardneſs of heart may be grown upon a perſon; or ſome ſinful luſts may have gotten ſo much ſtrength, that they will *not be ſubdued*; ſome evils private and public, 1 Sam. vii. 5, 7. Judges xx. 18, 23, compared with verſe 26. which cannot be *prevented* or *removed*; ſome ſpecial graces and bleſſings, which ſhall not be *obtained* or *continued*, but by the moſt importunate ſeeking of *God*, by *Faſting and Prayer*.

1ſt. Reaſons for Faſting.

Faſting is contrary to that *fulneſs* of bread, which maketh both body and ſoul more diſpoſed to vice, and indiſpoſed to religious duties, thro' drowſineſs of head, heavineſs of heart, dulneſs and deadneſs of ſpirit; now theſe being removed, and the dominion of the fleſh ſubdued by *faſting*, the body will be brought into ſubjection of the ſoul, and both body and ſoul to the will of God more readily, then otherwiſe they would be.

A day

A day of Faſt is a great aſſiſtance to the ſoul for the better performing of holy duties, ſuch as *Meditation*, *Reading*, and *Hearing the Word*, *Prayer*, *Examining*, *Judging*, and *Reforming* a perſon's ſelf; both becauſe his ſpirits are *better diſpoſed*, when he is faſting, to ſerious devotion; and the mind being ſo long taken *wholly off* from the thoughts, cares, and pleaſures of this life, he may be more intent, and earneſt in ſeeking of GOD.

"*Faſting* is an open profeſſion of guiltineſs "before GOD, and an expreſſion of ſorrow and "humiliation; being a real acknowledgment of "mans unworthyneſs, even of the common ne-"ceſſaries of this preſent life."

But it is not enough that the *body* be chaſtened, if the *ſoul be not alſo afflicted*; Iſa. lviii. 5. becauſe, (1.) it is elſe but a meer *bodily* exerciſe which profiteth little; nay, it is but an *hypocritical faſt*, abhorred and condemned of GOD; fruſtrating a chief end of the faſt, which is, that the *ſoul* may be afflicted.

Afflicting the ſoul worketh *Repentance*; another chief end, and companion of *Faſting*. For *godly ſorrow cauſeth Repentance, never to be repented of*, 2 Cor. v. 10.

When the ſoul is afflicted, and heavy laden with ſin, then a man will readily and earneſtly ſeek after GOD, even as the ſick do to the *Phyſician for Health*, and as a condemned man to the *King for a Pardon*. *In their affliction* (ſaith GOD) *they will ſeek me diligently*, Hoſ. v. 15. If this be true

of

of the outward, then much more of *inward* affliction.

The afflicted ſoul is a fit object of God's mercy; to him doth God look that is *poor and of a contrite ſpirit*, Iſa. lxvi. 2. that trembleth at his Word; yea, the *bowels of his fatherly compaſſion are troubled for him*, Jer. xxxi. 29. Who is troubled and aſhamed for his ſin.

Moreover, upon a *day of humiliation* (if a man deal ſincerely) this affliction of his ſoul driveth him quite out *of himſelf* to ſeek help of *God* in *Chriſt*; and maketh him endeavour to bring his ſoul into ſuch good frame, that he may truly ſay that he doth not *regard iniquity in his heart*, Pſa. lxvi. 18. and that his unfeigned purpoſe is, and endeavour ſhall be to keep a *good conſcience* toward God and Man alway. Whence followeth boldneſs, and aſſurance (through Chriſt Jeſus) that *God* will be *found* of him, John xv. 7. and that in *God's* own time, and in the beſt manner he ſhall have all his holy deſires *fulfilled*.

2d. Who are to obſerve Religious Faſts.

All whom lawful Authority enjoineth, are to keep a *publick Faſt*, Joel i. 14. ſo far as health will permit.

Theſe only may keep a *private Faſt*.

Such as are of *underſtanding*, elſe how can they ſearch out their ways, judge themſelves, or pray. In *publick Faſts*, if Authority think fit, little children may be cauſed to faſt, that the Parents, and others of underſtanding may (as by objects of miſery) be ſtirred up to a more thorow

humiliation;

humiliation; but, in *private*, Children and Ideots are to be exempted.

Secondly, *Novices and unexperienced Chriſtians* are not uſually to faſt in private; ſuch were *Chriſt's* Diſciples, Mat. ix. 14, 16, 17. Luke v. 33, 34, 35, &c. when exception was taken at our *Saviour*, becauſe they faſted not; he excuſeth them, not only that it was unſeaſonable to faſt in a time of Joy, while he the *Bridegroom* was with them: but becauſe they were not able to bear ſo ſtrong an exerciſe, they being like *old veſſels*, and *old garments*, which would be made worſe rather than better by the *new wine*, or *new cloth* of faſting. Strong phyſick is good, but not for babes. There is not the ſame reaſon why they may faſt *in private* as in publick, becauſe the miniſter by teaching them, and by praying with them, and for them, taketh from them the greateſt part of the burden of the faſt *in private*.

Thirdly, *all ſuch as are not in their own power*, are not to keep a *private faſt*, when thoſe under whoſe power they are ſhall expreſly *contradict* it. For the huſband might *diſallow* the vow of his wife, Numb. xxx. 5, 8, 13. even that wherewith ſhe had bound herſelf to afflict her ſoul by faſting. Wherefore none may faſt *againſt the will* of thoſe which have full power to command their ſervice and attendance.

3d. When and how long Faſts are to be obſerved.

Publick

Publick Faſts are to be kept as often as *Authority* ſhall ſee cauſe.

Private, as often as a man ſhall have *more then ordinary cauſe* of ſeeking unto GOD, 2 Sam. xii. 16. Neh. i. 4. either for others or himſelf, for *removing* or *preventing* eminent judgments from the *Church* and *Commonwealth*, Dan. ix. 3. or for *procuring* their neceſſary good; for *ſubduing* ſome head-ſtrong luſt, Acts x. 30. for *obtaining* ſome neceſſary grace, or ſpecial bleſſing; for *preparing* himſelf for ſome ſpecial ſervice of *God*, or the like.

Though I cannot but juſtly complain of Chriſtians *ſeldom faſting*; yet I dare not allow you to make this extraordinary exerciſe of Religion to be *ordinary* and *common*; for then it will ſoon degenerate into mere *Form*, or *Superſtition*: but wiſh you to obſerve it as you ſhall have *ſpecial* occaſion, and when ordinary ſeeking of GOD is *not likely* to prevail.

It is indifferent which of the *ſix* days you ſet apart for faſting, according as ſhall beſt ſuit with your occaſions. As for the *Lord's Day*, though it cannot be denied but that if the preſent neceſſity require, you may faſt upon *that* day, neither can I utterly deny ſervants, and ſuch as are under the power of others (if they can have no other time) ſometimes to make choice of that day; yet becauſe the *Sabbath* is a day of Chriſtian *Chearfulneſs* and Faſting is ſomewhat of the nature of a *free-will-offering*, I think you will do beſt

to

to ſet ſuch a day apart to yourſelf for Faſting, which is more your own, and not the *Lord's* day.

The *Scripture* hath not determined *how long* a continued faſt ſhould be kept, Heſter iv. 16. We have examples that ſome have faſted a longer time, as *Three* days; ſome a ſhorter, but none leſs then *one* day, Judges xx. 26. In hotter Countries they could, without injury to health, abſtain from food longer then we can who live in a colder; but I think the body cannot uſually be ſufficiently afflicted through want of food in leſs time then *one* day.

Thus I have proved *Religious Faſting* to be a *Chriſtian Duty*. And have ſhewed *what it is*; *who ſhould* and *may faſt*, *when*, and *how long*. It remaineth that I ſhew you *how* you may keep a Faſt *acceptable* to *God*, and *profitable to yourſelf*, which is the principal thing to be regarded in a *Faſt*. And this I do the rather becauſe many well affected *Chriſtians* have profeſſed that they would gladly ſet about the duty, but ingeniouſly confeſſed, that they knew not how to do it, and (in particular) how to be intentive and ſpiritually employed for want of matter, for a whole day together. But of this in the next Section.

§. 2. *Directions for the keeping a Religious Faſt.*

BY way of *Preparation* to a religious *Faſt*, do thus:

Take but a moderate Supper the *night before*; for if a man glut himſelf over night, he will be more

more unfit for the duty of humiliation the *next day*, and it differeth, in effect, little from breaking of faſt next morning.

When you commend yourſelf to God alone by prayer that night (as every good Chriſtian doth) then ſet yourſelf in a *ſpecial* manner to ſeek the *Lord*, 2 Chr. xx. 3. Dan. x. 12. as the Saints of God in the beginning of their Faſts have done; propoſing to yourſelf the *end* of your intended Faſt; remembering this, that if the chief occaſion and end be your *own* private good, that you forget not *others*, nor the *public*; or if it be the *public*; yet mind alſo your *own* private; for until you have renewed your *own* peace with God, your faſting and praying will prevail little for the *public*. And God having joined the public with our private good in *prayer*, we muſt not diſ-join them in our *faſting*. Reſolve with yourſelf, to the utmoſt of your power, to keep a *religious Faſt* unto God, according to his will; for this cauſe in your prayers add ſerious petitions to God for his grace to aſſiſt you therein.

When you *awake* that night, let not your thoughts be upon *worldly buſineſs*, much leſs upon any *evil thing*; but let them be holy, ſuch as may tend to the aſſiſtance of the holy duties of the next day.

Fourthly, (if neceſſity hinder not) *ariſe early the day of your faſt*. It is moſt agreeable to a day of *faſting* (whereon your fleſh is to be ſubdued) that you allow not yourſelf *ſo much ſleep* as

at

at other times. It is probable, that for this cauſe ſome lay on the *ground*, others in *ſack-cloth*, 2 Sam. xii. 16. in the nights of their faſts, not only to expreſs, but to aſſiſt their *humiliation*, Joel i. 13. by keeping them from ſleeping over much, or over ſweetly.

When the *day* is come, be ſtrict in obſerving the *outward* Faſt. To this end,

Firſt, *forbear all meat and drink*, Heſt. iv. 16. Luke v. 33. until the ſet time of the Faſt be ended, which uſually is about ſupper time. A general *Council* in the Primitive *Church* decreed, that total abſtinence ſhould be obſerved until *Evening Prayer* was ended. In caſe of neceſſity; that is, when total abſtinence will indeed diſable you from attending to the chief duties of that day, you may eat or drink; for in ſuch caſes GOD will have *mercy rather than ſacrifice*; but then it muſt be a *ſmall* refreſhment, and that not of a *dainty* kind; only ſuch and ſo much as may remove the impediment to the ſpiritual performance of the duties of that day.

Secondly, *abſtain from all other worldly delights*, (ſo far as will ſtand with comelineſs) as from fine apparel, Exod. xxxiii. 4, 5, 6. from all recreations, and pleaſant muſick, Iſa. lviii. 3. from the marriage-bed, and the like, 1 Cor. vii. 5. Joel ii. 16. Iſa. lviii. 3.

Thirdly, *abſtain from all worldly labour*, as upon a *Sabbath day*; for worldly buſineſs and the cares thereof, do as well *diſtract* the thoughts and *hinder* devotion as worldly delights; and a ceaſing

ceaſing from theſe giveth a full opportunity to holy employments the *whole* day. Therefore the *Jews* were commanded to *ſanctify a faſt*, Joel ii. 16. And that yearly Faſt, called the day of *Atonement*, Lev. xxiii. 27, 28, 29, 30. was, upon peril of their lives, to be kept by a forbearance of *all manner of work*. Now although the *Ceremonials* of that day are aboliſhed in *Chriſt*, yet, *forbearing work*, as well as meat and drink, (being of the ſubſtance and morality of a Faſt) doth remain to be obſerved in all truly *Religious Faſts*.

Thus much for the *outward faſt*, you muſt be as ſtrict in obſerving the *inward*.

Begin the day with prayer, according as I directed you to do every day; but with more then ordinary preparation, with fervency and faith, praying for GOD's ſpecial grace, to enable you to ſanctify a *faſt* that day according to the Commandment.

Then apply yourſelf to the *main* work of the day, which hath theſe parts; (1.) unfeigned *Humiliation*, (2.) *Reformation*, together with *Reconciliation*, and (3.) earneſt *Invocation*.

The ſoul is then *humbled*, the heart *broken* and truly *afflicted*, when a man is become *vile* in his own eyes, through conſciouſneſs of his own unworthyneſs, and when his heart is full of *grief and anguiſh*, through fear of GOD's diſpleaſure; and with godly ſorrow and holy ſhame in himſelf, and anger againſt himſelf for ſin. Theſe affections excited do much *afflict* the heart.

This

This *deep humiliation* is to be wrought, partly by awakening your Conſcience through a ſight of the *Law*, and apprehenſion of GOD's juſt *Judgments* due to you for the breach of it; which will break your heart; and partly by the *Goſpel*, raiſing your mind to an apprehenſion and admiration of the love of GOD to you in *Chriſt*, which will melt your heart, and cauſe you the *more kindly* to grieve, and to loath yourſelf for ſin, and alſo to entertain hope of mercy, whence will follow *reconciliation*, *reformation*, and *holy calling upon God by prayer*.

To work this *Humiliation*, there muſt be,

Firſt, *Examination*, to find out your ſins.

Secondly, an *Accuſation* of yourſelf, with due *Aggravation* of your ſins.

Thirdly, *Judging* and paſſing ſentence againſt yourſelf for ſins.

Sin is the *Tranſgreſſion of the Law*, and revealed will of GOD; wherefore for the better finding out of your ſins, you muſt ſet before you GOD's holy *Law*, for your *Light* and *Rule*, Pſa. cxix. 105. And if you have not learned, or cannot remember the heads of the manifold duties commanded, or vices forbidden; then get ſome *Catalogue*, or *Table*, wherein the ſame are ſet down to your hand, which you may read with ſerious conſideration and ſelf-enquiry, fixing your thoughts moſt upon thoſe *particular* ſins whereof you find yourſelf moſt guilty.

If you do not meet with one more fit for your purpoſe, then uſe this following *Table*.

But

But expect not herein an enumeration of *all* particular ſins and duties, which would require a volume; but of thoſe which are *principal* and *moſt common*; by which, if your Conſcience be awakened, it will bring to your remembrance other ſins and omiſſions of duty not mentioned in the Table, of which you may be guilty.

The *firſt Table of the Law* concerning duties of *love* and *piety to God*, the performance whereof tendeth immediately to the glory of GOD, and mediately to the ſalvation and good of man.

1ſt. *The* firſt *Commandment reſpecteth the loving, ſerving, and glorifying the only true God, as your God*, Exod. xx. 2, 3.

Examining yourſelf by this (and ſo in the other Commandments) think thus with yourſelf: Do I know and acknowledge the only true GOD to be ſuch a one as he hath revealed himſelf in his Word and Works, namely, *One only infinite, Immaterial, Immutable, Incomprehenſible Spirit, and everlaſting Lord God; having Being and All-ſufficiency in and from himſelf; One who is abſolutely full of all perfections, and uncapable of the leaſt defect; being Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Omnipotence, Love, Truth, Mercy, Juſtice, Holineſs, and whatſoever is originally and of itſelf excellent. The only Potentate, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, of whom, thro' whom, and to whom are all things. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, God bleſſed for ever, Amen.*

Do

Do I *Believe his Word*, in all things related, commanded, promiſed, and threatned therein? and that his holy and wiſe *Providence* is in all things? Have I *Him* and his *Word* in continual *remembrance?*

Do I *eſteem* and exalt *God* in my heart above all, ſo that it doth humbly *adore* him at the very mention and thought of him; judging myſelf to be *nothing* in mine own eyes, yea, eſteeming all creatures to be nothing in compariſon of him?

Have I given *religious worſhip* to him only? Have I believed in him, and in him only? Have I ſworn by him as there hath been cauſe, and by him alone? Have I prayed unto him, and him alone? And ſought to obtain help of him only by ſuch means as he hath appointed; giving the glory and thanks of my being, and well-being, and of all other things which are good, unto him?

Is my *Conſcience* ſo convinced of the Truth and Authority of *God*, that it holdeth itſelf *abſolutely bound* to obey him in all things, ſo that it doth incite to that which is good, reſtrain from that which is evil, encourage me in well-doing, and check me when I do ill?

Is my *will* reſolved upon *abſolute and unfeigned obedience*; to do whatſoever GOD commandeth, to forbear whatſoever he forbiddeth, to ſubſcribe to whatſoever he doth, as well done; and have I born *patiently*, all that, which either by himſelf or by any of his creatures, he hath inflicted upon me?

Have mine *affections* been ſo for *God*, that I have loved him with all my heart, *loving* nothing more than him, nothing equal to him? Do I *hate* every thing that is contrary to him? Hath my *Confidence* been only in him, and my *Expectation* of good from him? Have my *deſires* been to him, and for him, *longing* above all things to have *communion* with him? Hath it been my greateſt *fear* to offend him, or to be ſeperated from him? Hath it been my greateſt *grief* and *ſhame* that I have ſinned againſt him? Have I *rejoiced* in *God* as my chief Good? Hath mine *anger* riſen againſt whatſoever I ſaw contrary to his glory? Have I been *zealous* for *God?* And have I made him the *utmoſt end* of all mine actions?

Hath my *whole outward man*, as tongue, ſenſes, and all other active powers of my body, been employed in the ſervice of the true GOD, and yielded obedience to his will.

Or contrarywiſe, am I not guilty of *denying of God* in *word*, in *works*, or at leaſt *in heart?* queſtioning the truth of his *Being*, and of his *Word*, denying his *Providence*, *Power*, or ſome other of his *divine Attributes?* Have I not been *ignorant of God*, and of his will, and *erroneous* and *miſbelieving*, if not *heretical* in my conceptions concerning *God* the *Father*, *Son*, or *Holy Ghoſt*.

Have I not been *over curious* in prying into the nature and ſecret counſels of *God*, beyond the rule of the revealed will of GOD? Have I not put *myſelf*, or any other creature in the place of GOD,

GOD, through pride prefering, and reſting upon mine *own way* and *will* before GOD's, or by making myſelf mine utmoſt *end*, profeſſing GOD and his Religion, only to ſerve mine own deſigns, or by *ſeeking to the creature*, (as to Angel, Saint, Devil, or Witch) inſtead of the *Creator?*

Have I not been *forgetful* of *God*, and of his *Will?* Is not my *Conſcience* impure, blind, deluded, or feared; and my *will* perverſe, obſtinate, impatient, and murmuring againſt GOD, and full of diſſimulation?

Have I not ſet mine *Affections* upon the World rather than upon GOD, *loving* that which is evil, *hating* that which is good, yea *God* himſelf, if not directly, yet in his Holineſs, ſhining in his Ordinances, and in his Children, or as he is a ſevere inflicter of puniſhment? *fearing* man more than GOD, *truſting* in the Creature, making ſomething beſides *God* my chief Joy? Have I not *preſumed* when I had cauſe to deſpair, and *deſpaired* after that I had cauſe to hope? Have I not *tempted* GOD many ways? And have I not in the matters of *God* been, either cold, lukewarm, or blindly or prepoſterouſly zealous?

Hath there not been a proneneſs in my whole *outward man*, to *rebel* againſt *God?*

2d. *The* ſecond *Commandment concerneth all ſuch worſhip of God, which he only hath appointed; whereby he communicateth himſelf to man, and man again maketh profeſſion of him; forbiding*

(under one kind) all ſuch as are not by him ordained, Exod. xx. 4—6.

Think thus, have I *worſhiped God in ſpirit and truth* in all the *kinds* and *parts* of his *Worſhip*, public and private, ordinary or extraordinary, as, by *hearing*, *reading*, and *meditating of his Word*; by *praying*, *praiſing*, and *giving thanks* to him; by a right uſe of his *Sacraments*, *Baptiſm*, and the *Lord's Supper*, and by *Religious Faſting*, Religious *Feaſting*, and making of *Vows*, according as I have had ſpecial occaſion? And have I done what has been in my power for the *maintaining* and *promoting* of *God's* true Worſhip; and have I according to my place *executed aright*, or *ſubmitted unto* the *government* and *diſcipline* of the *Church of GOD*.

Or, beſides the *omiſſion* of the former duties, am I not guilty ſome way or other, of *Idol-worſhip*, conceiving of *GOD* in my mind, or repreſenting him to my ſenſe in the *likeneſs* of any creature?

Have I not *added to* or *detracted from* any part of *God's Worſhip?* Have I not run into the *appearances and occaſions of Idolatry*, as, by *preſence* at Idol-ſervice, by *marriage* and *needleſs familiarity* with Idolatrous Perſons? At leaſt, is not my heart guilty of *not hating*, but rather *lingering after*, Idolatrous Worſhip? Have I not been guilty of *ſuperſtition*, or *will-worſhip*, &c.

3d. *The*

3d. *The* third *Commandment concerneth the glory of God's holy Name, ſhining forth in his Titles, Attributes, Religion, Word, Ordinances, People, or any thing that hath in it any ſignatures of his holineſs or excellency; forbidding the taking of it in vain, and that in all words or actions, religious or common,* Exod. xx. 7.

Have I glorified *God*, by anſwering my holy profeſſion, with an holy and unblameable converſation; by performing all holy duties with *due preparation*, *knowledge*, and *devotion*, alſo by thinking and ſpeaking of the Names and holy Things of *God* with *holy Reverence*; and in particular, by *fearing an Oath?*

Or, have I not cauſed the *Name*, *Religion*, and *People* of *God*, to be ill thought of and diſhonoured by my *evil courſe of living*, or at leaſt by *commiting ſome groſs ſin?* Am I not guilty of *raſh*, *unprepared*, *heedleſs*, *forgetful* and *fruitleſs* reading, hearing, receiving the Sacraments, or performance of any other part of the worſhip of *God?*

Have I not *thought* or *ſpoken blaſphemouſly* or *contemptuouſly* of *God*, or any of the things of *God?* Have I not uſed the Name of *God needleſly*, *raſhly*, *wickedly*, or *falſly* in ſwearing, or *lightly* in my Salutations, Admirations, or otherwiſe in my ordinary diſcourſe?

Have I not *abuſed the Name of God*, his *Scriptures*, his *Ordinances*, and *Creatures*, uſing them

for other purpoſes then he alloweth, as, for *ſports*, *charms*, or any *ſorcery*, *luxury*, or the like? Have I not *paſſed by* the great works of GOD's power, mercy, and judgments (eſpecially of his Redeeming Love in Chriſt Jeſus) *without due obſervation* and acknowledgment of *God* therein?

4th. *The* fourth *Commandment concerneth the ordinary ſolemn time of the ſervice and worſhip of God, requiring that the ſeventh day (now our Lord's day) be kept as an holy reſt*, Exod. xx. 8—11.

Have I upon the ſix days *remembered the Lord's day*, that I might *diſpatch* all my worldly buſineſs, and *prepare* my heart, that when it came I might keep an *holy Sabbath* to the *Lord*, according to the *Commandment?* Did I according as my health would permit *riſe early* on that day?

Have I *performed* my daily, (both morning and evening) *exerciſes of Religion* alone, and with my family that day in private?

Have I *cauſed all under my authority*, according to my power, to *reſt* from all manner of *works*, and worldly *recreations*; alſo myſelf not only from the labour of my *body*, but of my *mind* in all worldly buſineſs; except about the things that concern *common honeſty*, and comelineſs, *works of mercy*, and ſuch *works of neceſſity* as could

could not be done before, or be let alone till afterwards?

Have I always *prepared my heart* before I went into the *houſe* and preſence of *God*, by *meditation* of *God's* Word and Works, and in particular by *examination*, and *reformation* of my ways, by *prayer*, *thankſgiving*, and *holy reſolution* to carry myſelf as in *God's* preſence, and to hear and obey whatſoever I ſhould be taught out of the Word of GOD?

Have I cauſed *my family* to go with me to the *Church?* And did I with them *come in due time*, and, being there, *ſtay* the whole time of *prayer*, *reading*, and *preaching* of the Word, *ſinging* of *Pſalms*, receiving and adminiſtring the *Sacraments*, even that of *Baptiſm*, when others are Baptiſed; and did *attend* diligently, and join with the *Miniſter* and the reſt of the *Congregation* in all thoſe holy exerciſes?

Did I *ſpend the day*, after the Morning and Evening Prayers, Sermons, or Catechiſings, in *meditation*, and (as I had opportunity) in *conference* and *repetition* of what I had heard? alſo *in viſiting the ſick*, and other *works of mercy*; and ſo from the beginning to the end of the day have been employed in *holy thoughts*, *words*, *and deeds*, and all this with *ſpiritual delight?*

Or, am I not guilty of *forgetting* the Lord's Day before it came, and of *neglecting* and *prophaning* it when it came? as, by meer *idleneſs*, or by *taking opportunity* of leiſure from the buſineſs of my calling to be licentious in company

keeping, &c. or by *reſerving* that day for journeys, idle viſits, and for diſpatch of worldly buſineſs?

Have I not been *careleſs of the Service of God*, frequenting it no oftner than Law, or very ſhame did compell me?

Have I not been *careleſs whether my ſervants or children* did keep the *Sabbath* or no? And when I was at Church, did I not *idle away the time* by gazing about, or by ſleeping, or by worldly thoughts?

Have I not bought, ſold, ſpoken of, or done other works forbidden to be done, ſpoken, or contrived upon that day?

Have I not under the name of *Recreation* ſought mine own pleaſure, uſing *ſports* and *games*, which cauſe the mind to be more indiſpoſed to the due performance of holy duties than *honeſt labours* do, to which they are ſubordinate, and with them forbidden to be done that day?

Hath not the *ſtrict obſervance of the Sabbath* been at leaſt *tedious* unto me, ſo that I could have wiſhed that it had been *gone* long before that it was ended?

5. *The ſecond Table concerneth duties of love and righteouſneſs towards man, the performance whereof tendeth immediately to the good of man; but mediately to the proof of his being truly religious, and to the glory of God.*

God

God made man not to be *alone*, nor to be only *for himſelf*; therefore for the greater good of mankind he hath endued men with variety of gifts, and degrees of place, ſome *excelling* others, both in *Family*, *Church*, and *Commonwealth*; yet ſo as each is excellent in his gift and place, even the meaneſt made worthy of reſpect from the greateſt, becauſe of his uſefulneſs for the *common* good: even as the leaſt member of the natural body is truly uſeful and to be reſpected as well, though not ſo much, as the moſt honourable.

Now when *each member* in the *body politick* doth acknowledge the *ſeveral gifts* and *mutual uſe* one of another, according to their place, then is there a ſweet harmony in the ſociety of man, and there is a *ſure foundation laid of all good Offices of love* between man and man.

Wherefore in the firſt place, *God* in this *fifth Commandment*, Exod. xx. 12. provideth that the *order* which he had ſet amongſt men, ſhould inviolably be obſerved; requiring all *Inferiors* under the name of *Children*, *to honour their Superiors*, that is, to acknowledge that dignity and excellency which is in them, ſhewing *it* in giving due reſpect unto their perſons and names; implying that all *Superiors* ſhould walk *worthy of* honour, and that they ſhould mutually ſhew good reſpect to their *Inferiors*, ſeeking their good, as well as their own.

Concerning this *fifth Commandment*, think thus; do I live in a *lawful Calling?* and have I walked worthy my *general Calling* of Chriſtianity,

and diſcharged my *particular Calling*, and imployed the gifts which *GOD* gave me, for the good of the ſociety, in *Family*, *Church*, or *Commonwealth?*

Have I *honoured all men*, for that they were made after the *Image* of GOD, and have yet ſome *remains* thereof, are capable of having it renewed, if it be not renewed already; and becauſe they are or may be *uſeful* for the common good of man; uſing them with all courteouſneſs and kind reſpect; excepting when, and wherein, they have made themſelves *vile* by open wickedneſs; ſo that it will not ſtand with the glory of *God*, good of others, or of themſelves, or with the diſcharge of my place, to ſhew them *countenance?* Have I ſhewed my due reſpect to others, in praying to *God*, and, as there hath been cauſe, in giving him thanks for them?

Have I *conceived the beſt*, that in charity I might, of others? And by *love* have endeavoured according to my place to *cure* their groſſer evils, and to *cover* their infirmities? And have I to my power promoted my neighbour's *good name* and reputation, and have I been contented, nay deſirous, that he ſhould be eſteemed as well, nay, *better then myſelf?* And, have I, both in his life time, and after his death, given him the honour of *common humanity*, as in common civilities at leaſt, and in comely burial, ſo far as any way it did belong to me, and in maintaining his injured reputation, &c.

Have

Have I, being *ſuperior to others in gifts* of any kind, as, learning, wit, wealth, ſtrength, &c. *employed thoſe gifts* to the honor of *God*, and the good of *man* more than others?

As I am *beyond others in years*, am I ſuperior to them in gravity, good counſel, and good example?

As I am *above others in Authority*, do I acknowledge that it is not originally in me, but derived to me from *God*, and have I held it, and uſed it *for him?* keeping within the due limits thereof, *governing with wiſdom and moderation*; procuring the *good* of their bodies, and ſouls, ſo far as lay in me; commanding only things lawful and convenient, encouraging them in well-doing, by commendation, and rewards; preventing evil as much as I could, and reſtraining it in them by ſeaſonable and due reproofs, according to the quality of the offence, and of the perſon, when fairer means would not prevail?

As I am an *equal*; have I *eſteemed others better than myſelf*, and ſtriven in honor to prefer them?

As I am *below others* in gifts and age, have I in word, and geſture, ſhewed them due reverence, and thankfully made uſe of their good parts, and experiences?

As I am *under Authority*, whether in *Family*, *Church*, or *Commonwealth*, have I *ſubmitted myſelf to all my Governors*, reverencing their perſons, obeying readily all thoſe their lawful Commandments, which are within the compaſs of their

Authority

Authority to injoin me? Have I received their inſtructions, and born patiently and fruitfully their reproofs and corrections?

Or do I not live without a *lawful Calling?* Or idly, or unprofitably in it? Have I not buried or abuſed my *Talent* and *Place*, to the hurt rather than the good of myſelf, and others!

Have I not *been high minded*, eſteeming better of myſelf than there was cauſe, ſeeking after the vain applauſe of men?

Have I not *deſpiſed* others? Yea, thoſe which were good, yea, my ſuperiors? ſhewing it by my unreverent geſtures, and by my ſpeeches to them, and of them? Have I not ſome way or other detracted from and diminiſhed the credit of others, or, at leaſt, envied their due eſtimation?

As I am a *Superior*, have I not carried myſelf inſolently, lightly, or diſſolutely?

As I am *under Authority*, have I not carried myſelf ſtubbornly and undutifully?

6th. *God having ſet an order in human ſociety, doth next provide for the life, and ſafety of the perſon of man, who muſt keep this order, and make this ſociety, by forbiding in the* ſixth *Commandment whatſoever may take it away, or impair it.*

Have I had a care of mine own health, in a *ſober uſe* of meat, drink, labour, ſleep, recreation, phyſick, or whatever elſe is apt to promote health, and to prevent diſeaſe?

Have

Have I been, or am I meek, patient, long ſuffering, eaſy to be appeaſed, apt to forgive, full of compaſſion, kind, merciful; ſhewing all theſe, in ſoft ſpeeches, gentle anſwers, courteous behaviour, requiting evil with good, comforting the afflicted, relieving the needy, peace making, and by doing all other *offices* of love, which might tend to my neighbour's ſafety or comfort?

Or, have I not *wiſhed myſelf dead*, or neglected the means of my health? Have I not *impaired it* by ſurfeits, by exceſſive labour or ſports, by freting and over grieving, or by any other means? And have I not had thoughts of doing myſelf harm?

Have I not been *angry* unadviſedly, maliciouſly, and revengfully? ſhewing ſurly geſture, and behavior, as, ſower looks, ſhaking the head, or hand, gnaſhing the teeth, ſtamping, mocking, railing, curſing, quarreling, ſmiting, hurting, or taking away the life of man any way, without GOD's allowance?

Have I not been a ſower of diſcord, or ſome way or other been an occaſion of the *diſcomfort*, if not of the *death* of others?

7th. *The* ſeventh *Commandment concerneth Chaſtity, whereby God provideth for a pure propagation and conſervation of mankind; forbiding all bodily pollution, under the name of* Adultery, Exod. xx. 13.

Have

Have I been modeſt, ſober, ſhamefaced, *poſſeſſing my body in chaſtity*, ſhuting mine eyes, and ſtoping mine ears, and reſtraining my other ſenſes from all objects, and occaſions of *luſt?* bridling my tongue from laſcivious ſpeeches; forbearing all manner of obſceneneſs and wantonneſs; abſtaining from ſelf-pollution, fornication, or any other natural, or unnatural *defilement* of my body, either in *deed*, or *deſire?*

And being *married*, was I wiſe in my choice? and have I kept the marriage-bed undefiled, through a ſanctified, ſober, and ſeaſonable uſe thereof?

Or, am I not guilty of manifold acts of *uncleanneſs?* at leaſt of immodeſt looks, touches, and embraces; of wanton ſpeeches, geſture, apparel, and behaviour?

Have I not run into the manifold *occaſions of* adultery and uncleanneſſes? as, idleneſs, gluttony, drunkenneſs, choice of ſuch meats, drinks, or any other things that provoke luſt; effeminate dancing, frequenting wanton company, or of unſeaſonable converſing with the other ſex alone?

8th. *The* eighth *Commandment concerneth the preſervation of man's goods, the means of his comfortable maintenance in this life, forbiding all injuries and wrongs under the name of* ſtealing.

Have I a *good Title* to the things which I poſſeſs, as by lawful inheritance, gift, reward, contract,

tract, or any other way which GOD alloweth? Have I been *induſtrious* and *faithful* in my Calling, frugal, and provident? Have I *done that* for which I have received pay or maintenance from others; and have I given to every man *his own*, whether tribute, wages, debts, or any other dues?

Or, have I not got my living by an *unlawful calling?* or have I impoveriſhed myſelf and mine, by idleneſs, luxurious and unneceſſary expences? by gaming, unadviſed ſuretiſhip, or otherwiſe? Have I not with-held from myſelf or others, through covetouſneſs, that which ſhould have been expended?

Have I not gotten or kept my neighbour's goods, by fraud, oppreſſion, falſhood, or by force, and made *no reſtitution?* Have I not ſome way or other *impaired* my neighbour's eſtate?

9th. *The* ninth *Commandment concerneth truth of ſpeech; the great means of intercourſe between man and man, and of preſerving the rights, and redreſſing the diſorders of human ſociety; forbiding all falſhood of ſpeech, under the name of bearing* falſe witneſs, Exod. xx. 14.

Have I at all times, in all things ſpoken the *truth* from my heart? giving teſtimony in public or private, by word or writing, of things concerning mine own or neighbour's name, and credit, life, chaſtity, goods, or in any matters of ſpeech between me or others, whether in affirming,

firming, denying, with or without oath, or in bare reports, promiſes, or in any other way?

Or am I not guilty of telling *lies*, jeſtingly, officiouſly, or perniciouſly? Have I not raiſed, ſpread, or received *falſe reports* of my neighbour? Have I not ſpoken *falſly* in buying and ſelling, alſo in commending by word or writing of unworthy perſons, in diſpraiſing the good, in boaſting of myſelf, or flattering of others?

Have I not given falſe evidence, uſed equivocations, or concealed the *truth* which I ſhould have ſpoken, or perverted it when I did ſpeak it?

10th. *The* tenth *Commandment concerneth* Contentment *with a man's own condition; the foundation of all order and juſtice amongſt men; forbiding the contrary, namely,* coveting *that which is not his,* Exod. xx. 15.

Am I *contented with mine own condition*, as, with my place which I hold in Family, Church, or Commonwealth, with huſband or wife, houſe or eſtate? Can I heartily rejoice in the proſperity of others, even when they are greater, happier, wiſer, or better than myſelf?

Or have I not been full of *diſcontent* with my condition, *coveting* after ſomething or other which was my neighbours? at leaſt by actual concupiſcence, in multitude of evil and envious thoughts, ariſing from the law of my members, though my will hath contradicted them?

2d. *Rules for Self-Examination from the Goſpel of Chriſt.*

Beſides the viſitations of GOD's *holy Law*, have I not been guilty of many ſins peculiarly againſt the *Goſpel* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Such as, *oppoſition to*, and *hatred of Chriſt*, and *his Cauſe?* being incenſed againſt him, and his Method of Salvation; or vilifying his Goſpel by Word or Writing, Iſa. xlv. 25.

Scepticiſm and *groſs Infidelity*, from a diſ-inclination to conviction; and not impartially, in the fear of GOD, weighing the evidences in proof of the heavenly Miſſion of our Lord and Saviour, Joh v. 39.

Unſound Faith; not extended to *all* the revealed truths and duties of the Goſpel; either through culpable ignorance, ſtrong prejudice, reſolving to believe no further than I can comprehend, or may be conſiſtent with the Quiet of my Conſcience in an evil Courſe, Joh iii. 19—21.——Or has it been a meer *national* and *hiſtorical Faith?* However extended to all the doctrines, duties, promiſes and threatnings of the Goſpel; yet not attended with heart-impreſſions, *humbling* the ſoul, making me *poor in ſpirit* at the feet of Chriſt; ſeeking the glory of GOD and the Redeemer, and my own ſalvation as my *chief buſineſs*, Gal. vi. 15.—Has it been ſuch a *faith* that doth not *purify the heart*, Acts xxiv. 18.—That *worketh not by love*, Gal. v. 6.

—That

—That *unites not the ſoul to Chriſt*; ſo as to crucify the fleſh with the affections and luſts, Gal. v. 24.—That *directs not the whole Converſation* by the Will and Example of our acknowledged Lord and Maſter; not reſting by faith in his promiſes, in all ſeaſons of *adverſity* and *proſperity*, 1 John ii. 6.—That *moderates not fear and hope* concerning things preſent and temporal, by looking to Jeſus, and things eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 13. Heb. xii. 12.—That does *not truſt and rely upon Chriſt alone* (in the preſcribed way) for Juſtification and Salvation; ſubmitting unto the Righteouſneſs of GOD in him, Rom. x. 3, 4.

Impenitency; not being ſeriouſly affected with an humbling ſenſe of the odious nature of ſin; not ſearching out my offences, but hiding and extenuating them. Not abaſing myſelf for my ſins (ſo many and aggravated) againſt all the *Love of the Father*, the *Grace of the Son*, and the *Strivings of the Holy Spirit*. No reſolved and vigilant forſaking of ſin, and bringing forth fruits meet for Repentance, 2 Cor. vi. 11. Mat. iii. 8.

Deſpair of GOD's Mercy in Chriſt Jeſus, ſaying there is no hope, Jer. ii. 25.

Preſumption, and turning the Grace of GOD into laſciviouſneſs; continuing in ſin that Grace may abound, Rom. vi. 1, 2. Jude 4.

Making light of Chriſt, not eſteeming him as the Pearl of great Price, and being willing to part with all to obtain it, Mat. xiii. 45, 46.

Slighting the Benefits of Redemption; ſuch as Peace with GOD through the Blood of Chriſt;

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the Gift of the Holy Spirit as Sanctifier; Meetneſs for, and a Title to the Kingdom of Heaven; and Communion with God in the Way to it, Luke xiv. 16—20.

Undervaluing the means of Salvation. The holy Scriptures, ſecret Prayer, public Worſhip, the Sacraments, &c. and not ſpirituality in, if attendance upon them, John iv. 23. Heb. x. 25.

Great Coldneſs and *Indifference* about the honor of the ſacred Name *into* which I was baptized; and all the peculiar Doctrines of the Goſpel, Phil. iii. 8.

No joyful Progreſs in the Works of Faith and Labours of Love, to the full Aſſurance of Hope, even where Faith is unfeigned, Phil. iii. 12—15.

Inconſtancy and *Fickleneſs* in the Service of God, with the natural Conſequences thereof, Diſpondency, Diffidence, and the Spirit of Bondage again to Fear, Gal. v. 7. Rom. viii. 15.—— *Slaviſh Fear* and *Cowardice*, 2 Tim. i. 7.

Declenſions in the Love of Chriſt and the Fruits of Holineſs; and *growing Conformity* to the World, in Luxury, Gaiety, Paſtimes, &c.—— with increaſing Inattention to the Soul's Immortality, the approach of Death and Eternity, the coming of the Lord, the Reſurrection and Judgment Day, Heavens Joys or Hells Horrors, Rom. ii. 1—3. 2 Pet. iii. 14.

Upon the Whole.

How ſhall Man be juſt with (or juſtify himſelf before) *God? If he contend with him, he cannot anſwer*

anſwer him one of a Thouſand, Job ix. 2. 3. — So that *every Mouth muſt be ſtopped*, ſince *all the World is become guilty before* GOD.—*Being juſtified* (if ever) *freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt; whom GOD hath ſet forth* (in the moſt illuſtrious manner) *to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood*, &c. Rom. iii. 19—27.

Beware therefore, leaſt that come upon you which is ſpoken of in the Prophets. Behold ye Deſpiſers, and wonder and periſh, Acts xiii. 40, 41. — *Examine yourſelves, whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own ſelves; know ye not your own ſelves, how that Chriſt Jeſus is in you, except ye be Reprobates*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

3d. *Self-Judging for Sin.——The Evil Nature, and Effects of Sin.*

Thus having by GOD's holy *Law* found out your ſins, you muſt *arraign* and *accuſe* yourſelf, as it were at the bar of *God's Tribunal*; repreſenting your ſins to your mind as they are, in their *heinouſneſs* and *miſchievouſneſs*, according to their ſeveral *aggravations*.

Firſt, conſider *ſin* in it's nature, it is a *moral evil*, an irregularity in the ſoul and actions, an enmity to *God* the chief good; it is the *worſt evil*, worſe than the *Devil* and *Satan*, he had not been a *Devil* but for ſin; worſe than *Hell*, which as it is a torment, is cauſed by *Sin*, and is only contrary to the good of the Creature, whereas

whereas ſin itſelf is contrary to the good of the Creator. It is ſuch a diſtemper of the ſoul, that the *Scripture* calleth it *wickedneſs of folly*, even *fooliſhneſs of madneſs*, Eccl. vii. 25.

Secondly, conſidering from *whence ſin in man had his original*, even from the *Devil*, John viii. 44. Gen. 3. who is the father of it; it came and cometh from *Hell*, Jam. iii. 15. therefore is *earthly*, *ſenſual*, *deviliſh*. Whenſoever you ſin, you do the luſts of the *Devil*.

Thirdly, conſider the *nature of the Law*, *whereof ſin is a tranſgreſſion*: A Law moſt *perfect*, moſt *holy*, *juſt*, *and good*, Rom. vii. 12. Gal. iii. 21. Rom. viii. 3. which would have given eternal life to the doers of it, had it not been for this curſed ſin.

Fourthly, conſider the *perſon againſt whom ſin is committed*, whom it highly offendeth and provoketh; it is *God*, Pſa. li. 4. to whom you owe yourſelf and all that you have; who *made*, Acts xvii. 28. and doth preſerve you, and yours; who, though you have ſinned, *deſireth not your death*, Eze. xxxiii. 11. nor afflicteth you willingly; but had rather that you ſhould humble yourſelf, repent and live; who, that you might be ſaved, *gave his only begotten Son* to death to ranſom you, John iii. 16. who, by his Miniſters, maketh known his Word and Good-will towards you, making *Proclamation*, that if you will *repent* and *believe*, you ſhall be ſaved; yea, intreateth you by his Miniſters to be *reconciled* to him, 2 Cor. v. 20. It is that *God* who is rich

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in goodneſs, forbearance, and *long-ſuffering*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. waiting when you will return, that you may live; who, on the other hand, if you deſpiſe this his goodneſs, and ſhall continue in your ſin, thereby provoking the eyes of his glory, Iſa. iii. 8. as a *terrible and revengeful God*, if you ſtill err in heart, and will not walk in his ways, hath *ſworn in his wrath, that you ſhall not enter into his reſt*, Heb. iii. 11. who in his wrath is a *conſuming fire*, Heb. xii. 29. and is ready and able to deſtroy body and ſoul in the eternal vengeance of Hell-fire, Mat. x. 28.

Fifthly, *conſider ſin in the evil effects of it*, namely, it brought a curſe upon the *whole Creation*, Gen. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 20. for man's ſake, whereby the creatures are oftentimes become defective, unſerviceable, nay, hurtful to you. From your ſins come all manner of *diſeaſes* and *afflictions* that ever befel you. This your ſin (until it be repented and pardoned) maketh you hateful to *God*, Pſa. xi. 5. ſeparateth between you and *God*, Iſa. lix. 2. cauſing him to with-hold good things from you, Jer. v. 25. and to inflict evil upon you, even in this life: It *defileth* the whole man, Tit. i. 15. and every renewed act of ſin doth *ſtrengthen* the body of ſin, and worketh a *decay* of grace in you, though you be regenerate. And if it be groſs iniquity, if it doth not *benumb* and *ſear* your conſcience, yet it will *wound* it, and break the peace thereof, if it be tender; vexing it as motes do your eye, or thorns your feet, Pſa. v. 1. cauſing

terrors

terrors and *doubtings* of Salvation; God's withdrawing his favour and loving countenance from you; and, if you be not in Chriſt, it will in the end bring upon you *everlaſting damnation*, Mat. xxv. 46. Rev. xxi. 8.

Sixthly, *conſider the ranſom for ſin*, who paid it, and what was paid; conſider *Chriſt Jeſus*, who he was, and what he did and ſuffered to take away your *ſin*. He, the only ſon of *God*, very *God*, did veil his glory for a time, and left heaven to dwell in the tabernacle of human fleſh, taking upon him the eſtate of a ſervant, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8. was poor, deſpiſed of men, Iſa. liii. 3. perſecuted from the *manger* to the croſs; made to ſhed tears abundantly, yea, ſo tormented with the ſenſe of GOD's wrath for your *ſin*, that for very anguiſh he did ſweat as it were *drops of blood*, Luke xxii. 44. He was accuſed, condemned, ſpit upon, mock'd, buffetted and ſcourged by wicked men, made to bear his own croſs till for very faintneſs he could bear it no longer, Mark xv. 21. Mat. 27. Then he was crucified amongſt thieves, dying the moſt accurſed death; and, which to him was more than all the reſt, he, in his human apprehenſion, was forſaken of *God*, crying out *my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*, Mat. xxvii. 46.

Now you may be aſſured, that if the *Juſtice of God could have been ſatisfied*, and your ſin expiated and done away *by a leſſer Price*, Jeſus Chriſt his only Son ſhould never have been cauſed

to

to pour out his ſoul a ſacrifice for your *ſin*, Iſa. liii. 10, 12.

This *looking* (by the eyes of your faith) *upon Chriſt whom you have pierced*, Zach. xii. 10. will at once ſhew you the greatneſs and hatefulneſs of your *ſin*, which required ſuch an infinite ranſom; and the infinite love of *God* and *Chriſt* towards you, even when you were his enemy; in providing for you a ſure remedy, which will free you from both guilt and power of this ſin. The thoughts hereof will (if any thing will) even melt the heart into godly ſorrow for ſin, and withall, give hope (in the uſe of means) of mercy and forgiveneſs.

That the former *Aggravations* may be more preſſing, obſerve theſe directions.

1ſt. You muſt *conſider ſin in the particulars*, one after another; for generals leave no impreſſions; therefore *David* crieth out of his bloody ſin in particular, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. Pſa. li. 14.

2d. You muſt *judge the leaſt ſin to be damnable*, James i. 15. untill it be pardoned, and repented of in particular, if known unto you; at leaſt in general, if not known.

3d. The *greater* any ſin is, Heb. x. 29. the greater you muſt judge the guilt and puniſhment to be.

4th. *Sins committed long ſince, unrepented of*, and the puniſhments deſerved but defered, are to be judged to be *as near*, lying at the door, Gen. iv. 7. and expoſing you to Condemnation, *as if committed at the preſent*; ſo that you may look for

God's

God's hand to be upon you this preſent moment; they, like the blood of *Abel*, or ſins of *Sodom*, cry as loud to *God* for vengeance *now*, as the firſt day they were committed; nay, louder, becauſe they are aggravated by impenitency, and by the abuſe of *God's* long-ſuffering.

5th. Your *humiliation* muſt, in your endeavour, *proportion your guilt of ſin*, Ezra 9. Ezek. x. 1, 2. the greater the guilt, the greater the humiliation.

Know therefore, that ſins againſt *God*, of the *firſt Table*, Mat. xxvi. 75. all things conſidered, are greater then thoſe of the *ſecond*.

The more *grace* hath been offered you by the Goſpel, Mat. xi. 21, 22, 23, 24. and the more means you have had to know *God* and his will, the greater is your ſin, if you be ignorant, impenitent, and diſobedient.

The *number* of ſins according as they are multiplied, do increaſe the guilt and puniſhment, Iſa. lix. 12, 13. Ezek. xvi. 51.

The *more bonds are broken in ſining*, as, committing it againſt the Law of *God*, of Nature and Nations, Jude 10. Jer. xxxiv. 18. againſt Conſcience, Promiſes, and Vows; the greater the ſin and puniſhment.

All theſe things known and conſidered, now *judge yourſelf*, 1 Cor. xi. 31. paſs a condemnatory ſentence againſt yourſelf; whence will, through the grace of *God*, follow affliction of ſoul. Now you will ſee that you are baſe and vile, and that you may juſtly fear *God's judgments*; now you will ſee cauſe to be grieved, a-

ſhamed, yea even confounded in yourſelf, and to conceive an holy indignation againſt yourſelf.

You will now think thus, Ah; that I ſhould be ſo fooliſh, ſo brutiſh, ſo mad, to commit this, to commit theſe ſins (*think of particulars*) to break ſo holy a Law, to offend, grieve, and provoke ſo good and ſo great a *Majeſty!* So ill to requite him, ſo little to fear him, *vile wretch* that I am! That I ſhould commit not only ſins of common frailty, but groſs ſins, many, and oft, againſt knowledge, conſcience, &c. (but ſtill mind particulars) *Jeſus Chriſt my Savior* ſhed his precious blood for me, to *redeem* me from my vain converſation, and do I yet *again* and *again* tranſgreſs, oh miſerable man that I am; what am I in myſelf at beſt, but a lump of ſin and pollution, not worthy to be loved, worthy to be deſtroyed; one that may juſtly look to have mine heart hardened, or my conſcience terrified, and that, if *God* be not infinitely *merciſull*, he ſhould pour upon me all his plagues. Wherefore *remembering my doings that they are not good*, but abominably evil, *I do loath myſelf for mine abominations*; Eze. xxxvi. 31. and do abhor myſelf, and repent, as in ſackcloth and aſhes, Job xlii. 6.

Now ſet upon the work of *Reformation* and of *Reconciliation*; *general* or *particular*, as you find there is need. It is not enough to ſearch out and conſider your ways, nor yet to lament them; if withall you do not *turn again* unto the Lord, Lam. iii. 40, 41, 42. Pſa. cxix. 59. Zeph. ii. 1, 2,

1, 2, 3. and turn your feet unto his Teſtimonies: and withall ſeek grace and forgiveneſs.

The Goſpel openeth a way, and affordeth means to attain *both*, through the commands and promiſes thereof, in the doctrine of faith and repentance.

Now therefore bring yourſelf to the Goſpel; try yourſelf thereby, firſt, whether your *firſt faith* and *repentance* were ſincere: then ſet upon reforming, and getting pardon of particular and later offences.

But learn to put a difference between the Commands of the *Goſpel*, and of the *Law*: the *Law* exacteth *abſolute obedience*; the gracious *Goſpel* doth, through CHRIST, accept of the *truth of Faith and Repentance*, ſo that there be an endeavour after their perfection.

It would be too long to ſhew you at large the *ſigns* of unfeigned Faith and Repentance, I will, for the preſent, only ſay this:

Have you been truly humbled for ſin? and through the promiſes, and commandment of the *Goſpel*, which bideth you believe; have you conceived hope of mercy, relying on Chriſt for it? and thereupon have had a true change in your whole man, ſo that you make GOD your utmoſt *End*, and receive the Lord Jeſus as your only Saviour; and, out of hatred of ſin, and love unto Chriſt and his ways, have a will in all things to live honeſtly, Heb. xiii. 18. and to keep allways a good conſcience towards GOD and man, Acts xxiv. 16. deſiring the ſincere milk of the

Word to grow by it, 1 Pet. ii. 2. loving the brethren, 1 John iii. 14. Pſa. xvi. 3. deſiring and delighting in communion with them? then you may be confident that your firſt faith, repentance, and new obedience was ſound.

If upon trial you find that they were *not ſound*, then you muſt *begin* now to repent and believe; it is not yet too late.

5th. Concerning *reformation* and obtaining of *pardon* and *power* of your particular ſins, do thus:

1ſt. Conſider the Commandments which biddeth you to *repent* and *amend*, Eze. xxxiii. 11. Rev. ii. 5.

2d. Conſider the Commandments which biddeth you to *come unto Chriſt*, when you are weary and heavy laden with your ſin, Mat. xi. 28. believing that through him they ſhall be pardoned and ſubdued, Mic. vii. 18, 19. to this end;

3d. Conſider that Chriſt hath *fully ſatisfied* for ſuch and ſuch a ſin, 1 John i. 9. yea, for all ſin, and that you have many promiſes of grace and forgiveneſs, 1 John i. 9. yea a promiſe that GOD will give you grace to believe in him, that you may have your ſins forgiven, Heb. x. 15, 16, 17.

4th. Conſider that there is vertue and *power in Chriſt's death, and reſurrection*, Phil. iii. 10. John i. 16. applied by *faith*, Acts xv. 9. 1 Pet. i. 21, 22. through his holy Spirit, for the *mortifying the old man* of ſin, and *quickening the new man* in grace; as well as *merit* to take away the *guilt and puniſhment* of your ſin.

5th.

5th. Improve this power of Chriſt in you unto an actual breaking off your ſins, and living according to the will of Chriſt, which is done by *mortifying that old man* of ſin, and by *ſtrengthening the new and inner man* of grace, Col. iii. 5. Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iii. 16.

In mortifying your ſins, do thus;

1ſt. Take *all* your ſins, eſpecially your *boſom ſins*, thoſe to which the diſpoſition of your nature, and condition of your place doth moſt incline you, your ſtrongeſt and moſt prevailing ſins, and with them the body of corruption in you, the original and fountain of ſin, Pſa. 51. ſmite at them, ſtrike at the very root, *arraign them*, condemn them in yourſelf, *bring them to the Croſs of Chriſt*, and nail them thereunto, Col. i. 20. Col. ii. 10—16. that is, believe that, not only in reſpect of their guilt, but alſo of their reigning power (through faith in his precious ſacrifice and interceſſion) they ſhall be crucified with him, dead, and buried, Rom. vi. as is livelily ſignified to you in your *Baptiſm*. When you ſee that your *old man is crucified with Chriſt, that the body of ſin may be deſtroyed*, you will take courage againſt ſin, and will refuſe to ſerve it, ſince by Chriſt you are freed from the dominion of it. When you thus by faith *put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. xiii. 14. you ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh.

2d. *Grieve heartily* for your ſins, James iv. 9. Job xlii. 6. 2 Cor. vii. 10. conceive deadly hatred againſt them, and diſpleaſure againſt your-

ſelf for them. Theſe like a *corroſive* will *eat out* the *life* and *power* of *ſin*.

3d. *Make no proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts of it*, Rom. xiii. 14. but be ſober in the uſe of all worldly things, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. this by little and little will *ſtarve* ſin.

4th. *Avoid all objects and occaſions of ſin*, Job xxxi. 1. Pro. xxiii. 20—31. yea, abſtain from the *appearance* of it, 1 Theſ. v. 22. this will *diſarm* ſin.

5th. When you feel any motion unto ſin, whether it ariſe from within, or come from without, *reſiſt it ſpeedily and earneſtly*, *by the Sword of the Spirit*, *the Word of God*, 1 Pet. v. 9. Acts viii. 20. as your *Saviour* did, Mat. iv. 4. and as *Joſeph* did, Gen. xxxix. 9. for which cauſe it muſt dwell plentifully in you, Col. iii. 16. Thus you ſhall *kill* ſin.

That you may ſtrengthen the inner man by the Spirit, whereby you may not only mortify the deeds of the fleſh, but bring forth the fruits of the Spirit: do thus,

1ſt. *Apply Chriſt*, *riſen from the dead*, *to yourſelf particularly*, Rom. iv. 25. Rom. vi. 4. Eph. ii. 5, 6. believing that *God* by the ſame power quickeneth you, *and raiſeth you together with Chriſt*, to walk in newneſs of life; reckoning yourſelf now to be alive unto GOD, Rom. vi. 9, 10, 11. being dead unto ſin, and become the ſervant of righteouſneſs. This *believing in Chriſt*, embracing and relying upon him as ſet forth in the *precious promiſes* of the *Goſpel*, 2 Pet. i. 4.

doth

doth draw virtue from Chriſt into your heart, and doth more and more incorporate you into him; and by it, he, by his Spirit, dwelleth in you, Eph. iii. 17. whereby of his life and grace, John i. 12.—16. you receive life and grace; and ſo, you are made partaker of the *divine nature, ſhunning the corruption which is in the world through luſt.*

2d. *Affect your heart with joy unſpeakable, and with peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. conſidering that you are *juſtified* through our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Rom. v. 1, 2, 3. Phil. iv. 4. this *Joy of the Lord*, Neh. viii. 10. as a *cordial*, will exceedingly ſtrengthen grace in the *inner* man.

3d. *Take heed of quenching or grieving the Spirit*, 1 Theſ. v. 19, 20, 21. but *nouriſh it* by the frequent uſe of holy meditation, prayer, hearing and reading the Word, receiving the Sacrament, by a Chriſtian Communion with ſuch as fear GOD, Acts ii. 42.—46. Acts iv. 32, 33. and by attending to the motions of the Spirit of GOD; which you ſhall know to be from it, when the thing whereunto it moveth is both for matter and circumſtance according to the *Scripture*, the Word of the *Spirit*. This is to be *led of the Spirit*; and this will be to *walk in the Spirit*, Gal. v. 16.—18. and then you ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh.

There remaineth yet one *principal* work wherein conſiſteth the chief buſineſs of the day of your *faſt*, for which all hitherto ſpoken maketh way, and by which, with the former means, you may attain to true *reformation* of yourſelf, and *reconciliation*

ciliation with GOD; which is *Invocation and earneſt Prayer to God* in the Name of *Chriſt*, through the *Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Sam. vii. 6. Neh. i. 4, &c. Neh. ix. 5, &c. Dan. ix. 3, 4, &c. in particular, large, and hearty confeſſions and complaints againſt yourſelf for your ſins, aſking forgiveneſs, making known your holy reſolutions, aſking grace, and giving thanks that GOD is at *peace* with you, having given *Chriſt* for you, and to you, (upon your believing in him) and that he hath given you *a mind* to know him, and the power of his reſurrection; with other firſt-fruits of the *Spirit*, which is the earneſt of your inheritance, Eph. i. 13, 14.

Let this ſolemn and more than ordinary *ſeeking of God* by prayer alone, be *twice at leaſt* in the day of your Faſt, beſides your ordinary prayers in the Morning and Evening, and having thus obtained peace with GOD, through faith in Chriſt Jeſus, you may, nay ought to pray for the *good* or againſt the *evil* which was the occaſion of the *Faſt*, Ezra viii. 23. 2 Chro. xx. 3.—6, &c.

But in praying you muſt in fervency of ſpirit *cry mightily*, Jona. iii. 8. ſtriving and wreſtling in prayer.

The extraordinary burnt-offerings, ſin-offerings, beſides the ſin-offering of the Atonement, to be offered the *ſolemn day of the Faſt*, Num. xxix. 7, to 12. under the Law (which as I told you, in the morality of it, is the *ſtandard of religious Faſts*) doth ſhew, that a *Faſt* muſt be kept in manner as hath been ſaid; for hereby we prepare

prepare and ſanctify ourſelves, and ſeek to *God* in *Chriſt*; hereby we by faith lay hold on *Chriſt*, the only true *ſacrifice for ſin*; and hereby we do by him draw nigh to *God*, and in token of thankfulneſs do give yourſelves to be an *whole* and *living ſacrifice*, *holy*, *and acceptable to God*, *which is our reaſonable ſervice*, Rom. xii. 1.

(4.) For your greater and more thorough *humbling* of yourſelf, and further exerciſe of your *faith* in *God*, and *love* to your brethren and Church of GOD, ſomething yet is to be added.

You muſt *repreſent to your thoughts* alſo the *ſins*, *and evils that are already upon*, *or hanging over the head of your family and neareſt friends*, *and of your town*, *country*, *or kingdom where you live*, together with their ſeveral aggravations; *lay them to heart*, Pſa. cxix. 136, 151. Jer. ix. 1. Jer. xiii. 17. conſidering that they by ſinning do diſhonour *God* your *Father*, and do bring evil upon the ſouls and bodies of thoſe whom you ſhould love as well as yourſelf: And it is a thouſand to one but that you are *involved* in their ſins, and become acceſſary, if not by example, counſel, permiſſion, or concealment, yet in not grieving for them, in not hating them, and in not confeſſing and diſclaiming them ſufficiently before GOD. Theſe alſo bring *common Judgments* upon *Church* and *State*, which you ſhould prefer before your own particular intereſt, and wherein you may expect to ſhare a part.

You muſt therefore affect your heart with theſe thoughts, and mourn for your *own* firſt,

and then for the *abominations* of your family, Eze. ix. 4. town, country, and kingdom. For the ſins of *Princes* and *Nobles*, Neh. ix. 34. for the ſins of *Miniſters* and *People*. And not only for the preſent ſins of the Land, but for the ſins long ſince committed, Dan. ix. 5, 6. whereof it hath not yet repented; *Rivers of Waters ſhould run down from your Eyes*, Pſa. cxix. 136. at leaſt *ſighs and groans ſhould riſe from your heart*, Eze. ix. 4. Jer. ix. 1. becauſe others as well as yourſelf have forgotten GOD's Law, and have expoſed themſelves to his deſtroying *Judgments*. Do all this ſo, that you pour out your heart like water to the *Lord* in their behalf, Lam. ii. 18, 19.

This is to ſtand in the *Breach*, Exod. xxxii. 11.—15. Pſa. cvi. 23. the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, Jam. v. 16, 17. if it be fervent, though he have infirmities. If it ſhould not take good effect for others, yet your tears and ſighs ſhall do good to *yourſelf*, Eze. xiv. 14. it cauſeth you to have GOD's ſeal in your forehead, Eze. ix. 4. you are marked for mercy. God will take you from the evil to come, Iſa. lvii. 1. or will make a way for you to eſcape, Jer. xxxix. 16. or will turn the hearts of your enemies to you, Jer. xxxix. 12. or if you ſmart under the common judgment, it ſhall be ſanctified to you: and if you periſh bodily, yet when others that cannot live, and are afraid to die, are at their wits end, you ſhall be able, in the conſciouſneſs of your godly ſorrow for your own

own and others ſins, to welcome death as a meſſenger of good tidings, and as a gate to everlaſting happineſs.

If it be a *public Faſt*, all theſe things beforementioned are to be done *alone*, both before and after the public exerciſes, at which time you muſt join in public hearing the Word read and preached, and in prayer with more than ordinary intention and fervency.

If you *faſt with your family*, or with ſome few, let convenient times be ſpent in *reading* the Word of GOD, or ſome good Book or Sermons, which may be fit to direct, and quicken you for the preſent work; alſo in fervent prayer: the other time *alone*, let it be ſpent as I have ſhewed before.

If ſome *public or neceſſary occaſion*, ſuch as you could not well foreſee or prevent, when you made choice of your day of private faſt, happen to interrupt you: I do judge that you may *attend thoſe occaſions notwithſtanding the Faſt*; but do it thus, if they may be diſpatched with little ado, then diſpatch them, and after continue your faſt; but if you cannot, I think that you had better be humbled that you were hindred, break off your faſt, and ſet ſome other day apart inſtead thereof; even as when a man is neceſſarily hindred in his *vow*, Num. vi. 9.—12.

(5.) The benefits of religious faſting.

The *benefit* that will accrue to you by *religious faſting*, will be *motive* enough to a *frequent uſe* of it, as there ſhall be cauſe.

1ſt. It was never read or heard of, Judges xx. 26.—35. 1 Sam. vii. 6, 7,—10. Ezra viii. 23. 2 Chro. xx. 3.—22. Jonah iii. 7.—10. that a *faſt* was kept in truth according to the former directions from the Word, but it either obtained the *particular* bleſſing for which it was kept, or at leaſt a *better*, to him that faſted.

2d. And beſides thoſe advantages, thus *faſting* will put the ſoul into ſuch good frame, into ſuch an *habit of ſpiritual mindedneſs*, that (as when againſt ſome ſpecial entertainment, a day hath been ſpent in ſearching every corner in a houſe to waſh and cleanſe it) it will be kept clean with common ſweeping a long time after.

I do acknowledge that *ſome have faſted, and God hath not regarded it*, Iſa. lviii. 3. yea, he telleth ſome before-hand, that *if they faſt, he will not hear their cry*, Jer. xiv. 12. But theſe were ſuch who *faſted not to God*, Zach. vii. 5, 11, 12. they only ſought themſelves, they would *not hearken to his Word*, there was no putting away of ſin, or *looſing the bands of wickedneſs, &c.* Iſa. lviii. 6. *No mortification of ſin, no renewing their Covenant with God.* Now, unleſs we do join the inward with the outward, *we may faſt but the Lord ſeeth it not*, Iſa. lviii. 3, 4, 5. *we may afflict ourſelves, but he taketh no notice; we may cry and howl, but cannot make our voice to be heard on high:* But when GOD ſeeth the *works* of them that faſt, that they *turn from their evil way*, Jona iii. 10. yea, that they will ſtrive to turn and ſeek him with all their heart, then *he*

will

will turn to them, his bowels of compaſſion doth yern towards them, and *I will have mercy on them ſaith the Lord,* Jer. xxxi. 18, 19, 20.

After the time of the *Faſt* is ended, eat and drink but moderately. For, if you then over-indulge yourſelf, it will put your body and ſoul both out of order.

Secondly, your Faſt being ended, *hold the ſtrength which you got that day* as much as you can; keep your intereſt and holy acquaintance which you have obtained with *God,* and the holy exerciſes of Religion. Though you have given over the exerciſes of the day, yet unlooſe not the bent of your *care* and *affections* againſt ſin, and for *God.* It is a corruption of our nature, and it is a policy of Satan to help it forward, that (like ſome unwiſe warriors when they have gotten victory over their enemies) we grow full of *preſumption,* and ſecurity, by which the enemy taketh advantage to *recollect* his forces, and coming upon us unlooked for, giveth us the foil, if not the overthrow. We are too apt, after a day of humiliation, *to fall into a kind of remiſſneſs,* as if then we had gotten the maſtery; whereas if *Satan* fly from us, if *ſin* be weakened in us, it is but for a *ſeaſon,* Luke iv. 13. and but in part, and, eſpecially if we ſtand not upon our watch, Satan will take occaſion to return, and ſin will revive in us, Mat. xii. 43. 44.

I will add a few Cautions touching this *excellent,* but *neglected* duty of *Faſting*;

1ſt.

1ſt. The *body*, although it muſt be kept under, 1 Cor. ix. 27. Col. ii. 23. yet *it muſt not be deſtroyed with Faſting*. It muſt not be ſo weakened as to be diſabled to perform the works of your ordinary calling.

2d. In *private Faſts* you muſt *not be open*, Mat. vi. 16. but as private as conveniently you may.

3d. *Seperate not the inward from the outward work in Faſting*, Iſa. lviii. 6, 7.

4th. Think not to *merit* by your Faſting as *Papiſts* do.

5th. *Preſume not* that preſently upon the *work done*, *God* muſt grant every petition, as *Hypocrites* do, Iſa. lviii. 3. that ſay to him, *we have faſted and thou doſt not regard it*. You may and muſt *expect* a gracious hearing upon your *unfeigned humiliation*, Mat. xxi. 22. but, as for *when*, and *how*, you muſt wait patiently: *faith ſecureth you of good ſucceſs*, 1 John v. 14. but neither preſcribeth unto *God* how, Iſa. xl. 13. nor yet doth it *make haſt*, Iſa. xxviii. 16. but waiteth his leiſure, when in his wiſdom he ſhall judge it moſt ſeaſonable.

CHAP. V.

Of the LORD's-Day, *or Chriſtian Sabbath.*

ON the *Sabbath* or *Lord's-day*, Exod. 20. you muſt *remember to keep it holy, according to the Commandment*. For this cauſe conſider,

(1.) The

(1.) The divine Inſtitution of the Lord's-day, or Chriſtian Sabbath.

Firſt, *put a difference* between *this* and the other *ſix* days, even as you put a difference between the bread and wine in the *Sacrament*, and that which is for *common* uſe. And that becauſe it is ſet apart for holy uſe, by divine inſtitution. For as the *ſeventh* day, from the beginning of the *Creation*, untill the day of *Chriſt's* bleſſed *Reſurrection*; ſo our *Lord's Day*, which is the day of the *Reſurrection*, is by divine inſtitution *moral*. The Commandment to keep an holy reſt upon the *Seventh* day after the ſix days of work (which is the ſubſtance of the fourth Commandment) remaineth the ſame: And this *Adam* (no doubt) by the inſtinct of uncorrupted nature, which deſireth a time for GOD's honour and ſolemn worſhip, he knowing that GOD finiſhed the Creation in *ſix* days, and reſted on the *Seventh*, would have obſerved; yet it was requiſite, that the particular day ſhould be by inſtitution, for natural reaſon could not certainly tell him *which* day. The Lord of the Sabbath therefore limited it unto the *ſeventh* from the Creation untill Chriſt's Reſurrection, and then removed it to the day we keep, which is the *firſt*.

Now it appears, that it was the *will* of our *Lord and Saviour Chriſt*, that we ſhould, ſince his *Reſurrection*, keep for our *Sabbath*, that *firſt day of the week*: Foraſmuch as he *aroſe* on that day, John xx. 1.—19. and appeared divers times on this *our Lord's day to his Diſciples* before his Aſcenſion: and

and did on this day, being the day of *Penticoſt*, Acts ii. 1.—4. fill his Diſciples with the gifts of the *Holy Ghoſt*, they being aſſembled together; all which giveth a pre-eminence to *this* day, and a probability to the point.

But in as much as the *Apoſtles*, 1 Cor. xi. 1. who followed Chriſt, and delivered nothing but what they *received* from Chriſt, 1 Cor. xi. 23. 1 Cor. xiv. 37. did *obſerve this Day as a Sabbath*, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. what can this argue but a *divine inſtitution* of this Day? The Apoſtle *Paul* might have choſen any other day, Acts xx. 6, 7. for the people to aſſemble to *hear the Word*, and *receive the Sacrament*, but they aſſembled to receive the Sacrament, and to hear the Word upon the *firſt day of the week*, which is our *Lord's Day*. Now the approved practice of the Apoſtles, and of the Church with them, recorded in Scripture, carrieth with it the force of a *precept*.

Moreover, the *Spirit of God* honoureth this day with the *Title of the Lord's Day*, Rev. i. 10. as he doth the *Communion*, with the Title of the *Supper of the Lord*, 1 Cor. x. 21. 1 Cor. xi. 20. What doth this argue but as they both have reference to Chriſt, ſo they are both appointed by Chriſt? The *Spirit of Chriſt* knew the mind of *Chriſt*, who thus named this day.

(2.) Directions for the religious Obſervance of the Lord's day.

Secondly, being *convinced* of the holineſs of this day (the better to *keep it holy* when it cometh) you muſt,

1ſt. On

1ſt. On the *week day*, before the *Sabbath*, or Lord's day, *remember it*, Exod. xx. 8, 9. to the end that none of your worldly buſineſs be *left undone*, or *put off* till then; eſpecially upon *Saturday* you muſt prepare for it. Then you muſt put an end to the works of your Calling; and do whatſoever may be well done before-hand, to prevent bodily labour even in your neceſſary actions, that, when the day cometh, you may have *leſs occaſion* of worldly thoughts, leſs incumbrance and diſtractions; and may be more free, both in body and mind, for ſpiritual exerciſes.

2d. You yourſelf and (as much as in you lieth) all under your authority, muſt *reſt* upon this day, Exod. xxiii. 12. Exod. xxxiv. 21. the ſpace of the *whole day* of four and twenty hours, from all *manner of works* (except thoſe which have true reference to the preſent days works) of *piety*, *mercy*, and *true neceſſity*, Mat. xii. 1—13. *not doing your own ways, not finding your own pleaſures, nor ſpeaking your own words*, Iſa. lviii. 13.

3d. It is not enough that you obſerve this day as a reſt, but you muſt keep an *holy Reſt*. Which that you may do, you muſt in your *awaking* in the morning put difference between it and other days, not thinking on any worldly buſineſs more than will ſerve for a general providence to preſerve you from great hurt, or loſs. Both in your lying awake, and riſing this morning, make uſe of the former directions, ſhewing you how to awake and riſe with GOD. *Riſe early*, Pſa. xcii. 2. (if it will conſiſt with your health, and not hinder

hinder your fitneſs for ſpiritual exerciſes through drowſineſs afterward) that you may ſhew forth GOD's loving kindneſs in the *morning*. *Double* your devotions on the *Lord's day*, Num. xxviii. 3—9, 10. as the *Jews* did their *morning and evening ſacrifice* on the *Sabbath day*, Eccl. v. 1, 2. *Prepare* yourſelf for the publick holy ſervices by reading, by meditation, and by putting away *all filthineſs*, James i. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. that is, repenting of every ſin; and caſting away the *ſuperfluity of naughtineſs*: that is, let no ſin be allowed or ſuffered to reign in you. Then *pray* for yourſelf, Eph. vi. 19, 20. and for the Miniſter, that GOD would give him a mouth to *ſpeak*, and you an heart to *hear*, as you both ought to do. All this, before you ſhall aſſemble for public worſhip. Being thus prepared, bring your family with you to the *Church*. Join with the Miniſter and Congregation. Set yourſelf as in the ſpecial preſence of GOD, following the example of good *Cornelius*, Acts x. 33. with all reverence, attending and conſenting; ſaying *Amen* with underſtanding, faith, and affection, to the prayers uttered by the Miniſter: *believing*, Heb. iv. 2. and *obeying*, James i. 22. whatſoever is by him commanded you from GOD. Afterward by meditation, and by *conference*, Pſa. cxix. 11. and if you have opportunity, by *repetitions*, call to mind, and wiſely and firmly *lay up* in your heart what you have learned, Pſa. cxix. 11. The like care muſt be had before, at, and after the *Evening* exerciſe.

(3.) The

(3.) The Nature and Deſign of Baptiſm, and the Lord's-Supper, &c.

1. If *Baptiſm* be adminiſtred, *ſtay*, Eze. xlvi. 10. and attend unto it, (1.) To honour that *holy Ordinance* with the greater ſolemnity. (2.) And in charity to the *perſons* to be Baptiſed, joining with the Congregation in hearty prayer for them, and in a joyful receiving them into the Communion of the viſible Church. (3.) Alſo in reſpect of *yourſelf*. For hereby you may call to mind your own *Baptiſm*, in which you did *put on Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 27. which alſo doth lively repreſent the *death, burial, and reſurrection of Chriſt*, Gal. v. 24. together with your crucifying the affections and luſts, *being dead and buried with him unto ſin, and riſing with him to newneſs of life*, and to hope of glory, Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5. Col. ii. 11, 12, 13. underſtanding clearly that the *Blood and Spirit of Chriſt*, Heb. ix. 14. Heb. x. 22. ſignified by *water*, doth cleanſe you from the guilt and dominion of ſin to your *Juſtification*, and *Sanctification*, Mat. iii. 11. Tit. iii. 5. 1 John i. 7. Remembering moreover, that, by way of *Sealing*, Gen. xvii. 11. Rom. iv. 11. your *Baptiſm* did in particular exhibit and apply to you that believe, *Chriſt* with all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace ratified in his Blood: minding you alſo of this, that it doth not only ſeal *God's* promiſes of forgiveneſs, grace, and ſalvation to you; but that alſo it ſealeth and bindeth you to the performance of your promiſe, and *vow of faith and obedience*, which is the branch

branch of the Covenant to be performed, (according as was profeſſed,) on your part.

Recourſe to your *Baptiſm* is an excellent *ſtrengthner* of your weak faith, 1 Pet. iii. 21. and an occaſion of *renewing* of your vow, you having broken it: and of *reſiſting* temptations, conſidering that they are againſt your promiſe and vow in *Baptiſm*.

2. Directions for the right Attendance on the *Lord's Supper*.

When there is a *Communion*, receive it as *oft* as (without interrupting the order of the Church) you may. But be careful to *receive it worthily*, 1 Cor. xi. 27.

It is not enough that you be *born within the Covenant*, and that you have been *Baptiſed*; but *you muſt have knowledge of the nature of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*, 1 Cor. xi. 23. Rom. iv. 11. both that it is of divine inſtitution, and that it is a ſign and ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, ſignifying to you (by the breaking and giving of the bread, and by pouring out and delivering the wine) 1 Cor. xi. 26. the meritorious Sacrifice of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in whom the Covenant of Grace is eſtabliſhed, 2 Cor. i. 20, 21. Heb. vii. 22. preſenting alſo and ſealing unto you by the elements of bread and wine, the very *body and blood of Chriſt*, with all the benefits of the new Covenant, of which you receive indeed livery and *ſeiſin* in the act of receiving by Faith, whereby you alſo grow into a nearer *Union* with *Chriſt* your head, 1 Cor. x. 16,

16, 17. and *Communion* with all his Members your Brethren.

Beſides, there muſt be a *ſpecial Preparation* by *examining* yourſelf, 1 Cor. xi. 28. and renewing your Peace *with God* before you receive, according to the Directions before given, Chap. v. §. 2. Alſo make your peace, at leaſt *be at peace*, Mat. v. 23, 24. and in charity with your *neighbour*, by an hearty acknowledging your fault ſo far as is fit, and making recompence, if you have done him wrong, Col. iii. 13. and by forgiving, and forbearing revenge if he have done you wrong.

In the act of adminiſtring, and receiving, join in *confeſſion* and *prayers*, and attend to the *actions* of the Miniſter when he breaketh the bread, poureth out the wine, and by bleſſing ſetteth it apart for holy uſe, 1 Cor. x. 16. *by Faith behold Chriſt*, by repreſentation, *wounded, bleeding, and crucified before your eyes for you*; looking upon him whom *your* ſins condemned and pierced to the death rather than his accuſers, and thoſe which nailed him to the Croſs; who (though malicious) were but inſtruments of that puniſhment which God with other tokens of his wrath did execute upon him (though in himſelf a Lamb without ſpot) juſtly for *your* ſin, he being *your* ſurety.

This *looking upon him whom you have peirced*, Zach. xii. 10. ſhould partly diſſolve you into an *holy grief* for ſin: but chiefly (conſidering that by this his paſſion he hath made full ſatiſfaction

faction for you, and alſo ſeeing what bleſſings *God* and *Chriſt* himſelf, by the hand of his Miniſter, giving Chriſt's body and blood *ſacramentally*, do ſignify and ſeal unto you,) it ſhould raiſe your heart to an *holy admiration* of the love of GOD, and of Chriſt, and it ſhould excite you in the very act of taking the bread and wine to a *reverend and thankful receiving of this his body and blood by faith*, 1 Cor. xi. 29. diſcerning the *Lord's body*; gathering aſſurance hereby that now all enmity between *God* and you is done away, (if you are believers indeed) and that you by this, as by ſpiritual food and life, ſhall *grow up* in him with the reſt of his myſtical body, unto everlaſting life.

1ſt. *After* that you have received (untill you be to join in public praiſe and prayers) *affect your heart with joy and thankfulneſs* in the aſſurance of the pardon of all your ſins, and of ſalvation by *Chriſt*, and that more than if you being a *bankrupt*, ſhould receive an acquittance ſealed, of the Releaſe of all your *debts*, and with it a Will and Teſtament wherein you ſhould have *a Legacy* of no leſs than a Kingdom, ſealed with ſuch a *ſeal* as giveth clear proof of the fidelity, ability, and death of the Teſtator: or than if having been a *traitor*, you ſhould receive a *free* and *full pardon* from the King, ſealed with his own ſeal, together with an Aſſurance that he hath *adopted you* to be his child, to be married to his ſon, the heir of the Crown. This is your caſe, when by faith you receive the bread and wine, the body and blood of the *Lord*. Think thus therefore

fore with joy and rejoicing in *God*, oh! how happy am I in *Chriſt* my Saviour, *God* who hath given him to death for me! and alſo given him to me, how ſhall he not *with him* freely give me all things? Rom. viii. 32. even whatſoever may pertain to life, godlineſs, and glory, 2 Pet. i. 3. who ſhall lay any thing to my charge? &c. Rom. viii. 33, —— 39. who, or what can ſeparate me from the love of CHRIST? &c.

2d. *Reſolve* withall *upon a conſtant and an unfeigned endeavour to perform all duties becoming one thus acquitted*, thus redeemed, pardoned, and advanced; and this in token of thankfulneſs; even to *keep covenant* required to be performed on your part; *undoubtedly expecting* whatſoever *God* hath covenanted and *ſealed on his part*.

3d. *Join in public praiſe and prayer* heartily, and in a *liberal contribution* to the poor if there be a Collection.

4th. After the *Sacrament*, if you feel your faith ſtrengthned, and your ſoul comforted, *nouriſh it* with all thankfulneſs.

If not, yet, if your Conſcience can witneſs that you endeavoured to prepare as you ought, and to receive as you ought, be *not diſcouraged*, but wait for ſtrength and comfort in due time. We do not always feel the benefit of *bodily* food preſently, but ſtirring of humours and ſenſe of diſeaſe is ſometimes rather occaſioned; yet in the end being well digeſted, it ſtrengthneth; ſo it is often with *ſpiritual* food, corruption may ſtir and temptations may ariſe more upon the receiving

ceiving than before; eſpecially ſince Satan, if it be but to vex a tender-hearted Chriſtian, will hereupon take occaſion to tempt with more violence: But if you *reſiſt* theſe, and *ſtand reſolved to obey and to rely upon God's mercy in Chriſt*, this is rather a ſign of receiving worthily; ſo long as your deſires and reſolutions are ſtrengthned, and you thereby are made more carefully to ſtand upon your Watch. Endeavour in this caſe to digeſt this ſpiritual food by further *meditation*, improving that ſtrength you have, praying for more ſtrength, remembring the commandment which biddeth you to be *ſtrong*; and you ſhall be *ſtrengthned*, Eph. vi. 10. Dan. x. 19.

5th. Laſtly, if you find yourſelf *worſe indeed*, or do feel God's heavy hand in ſpecial manner upon you, 1 Cor. xi. 30. following upon your receiving, and your Conſcience can witneſs truly that you came not *prepared*, or that you did wilfully and careleſly *fail* in ſuch or ſuch a particular in receiving, it is evident you did receive *unworthily*. In which caſe you muſt heartily bewail your ſin, confeſs it to *God*, 1 John i. 9. aſk and believe that he will pardon it, through Chriſt Jeſus, upon your ſincere faith and repentance, 1 John ii. 1, 2. and take heed that you offend not in that kind another time.

(7.) Upon the Lord's day you muſt likewiſe be ready to viſit and *relieve* the diſtreſſed, 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

Take ſome time this day to look into your *paſt life*, and chiefly to your walking with God the

the laſt Week, as being freſheſt in Memory, and be ſure to let no old Scores of Sin remain between GOD and you.

Laſt of all, on every opportunity take good time to conſider *God's works*: what they are in *themſelves*, what they are *againſt the wicked*, what they are to the *Church*, and to *yourſelf and to yours*. And, in particular, take occaſion from the Day itſelf, to think fruitfully of the *Creation*, of your *Redemption*, *Sanctification*, and of your *eternal Reſt* and glory to come: For GOD in his holy Wiſdom hath ſet ſuch a divine Mark upon this our *Lord's-day*, that at once it doth mind us of the *greateſt Works* of GOD, which either conduce to his glory, or his Churches good. As, of the *Creation* of the World in ſix Days, he reſted the Seventh, which ſpecially is attributed to the *Father*. And of man's *redemption by Chriſt*, of whoſe *reſurrection* this Day is a remembrance, which is ſpecially attributed to the *Son*: Alſo of our *ſanctification by the Spirit*, for that the obſervation of the *Sabbath* is a ſign and means of *holineſs*, which work is ſpecially attributed to the *holy Ghoſt*. Laſtly, of *your and the Churches glorification*, which ſhall be the joint work of the *bleſſed Trinity*, when we ſhall ceaſe from all our works, Heb. iv. 9, 10. and ſhall reſt, and be glorious with the ſame glory which our Head Chriſt hath with the Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen. Do all theſe which *delight*, Pſa. 92. Iſa. lviii. 13.

raiſing up yourſelf hereby to a greater meaſure of *holineſs*, and *heavenly mindedneſs*.

(4.) Motives to keep holy the Lord's-day.

Do all this the rather becauſe there is not a clearer *ſign* to diſtinguiſh you from one that is profane, Exod. xxxi. 13. than this, of conſcionable keeping holy the *Lord's-day*. Neither is there any ordinary means of gaining *ſtrength* and *growth* of Grace in the inward man, like this, of due obſerving the *Sabbath*, Eze. xx. 12. For this is GOD's great *Mart*, or Fair-day for the Soul, on which you may buy of *Chriſt*, *wine*, *milk*, *bread*, *marrow and fatneſs*, Iſa. lv. 1, 2, 3, 4. *gold*, *white raiment*, *eye-ſalve*, Rev. iii. 18. even all things which are *neceſſary*, and which will *ſatisfy*, and cauſe the Soul to live. It is the ſpecial Day of *proclaiming and ſealing of Pardon* to penitent Sinners, Acts ii. 38. It is *God's* ſpecial Day of *publiſhing and ſealing your Patent of eternal life*. It is a *bleſſed day*, *ſanctified* for all theſe bleſſed purpoſes, Exod. xx. 11.

Now, leaſt this ſo ſtrict obſervation of the *Lord's-day*, in ſpending the whole day in holy meditation, holy exerciſes, and works of mercy (excepting only neceſſary repaſts,) ſhould be thought, as it is by ſome, to be meerly Jewiſh, or only the private opinion of ſome *Zealots*, more nice than wiſe. Know, that as the fourth Commandment is of *moral* obligation, there is the ſame reaſon for the ſtrict obſervance of it, as any other divine precept, as againſt Idolatry, Murder, Fornication, &c.—And the taking away

way of the morality of the *fourth* Commandment, and unlooſing the conſcience from the immediate bonds of GOD's Command to obſerve a day for his ſolemn Worſhip, doth overthrow *true Religion*, and the *power of Godlineſs*, and opens a wide gap to *Atheiſm*, profaneneſs, and all licentiouſneſs; As daily experience proves in thoſe perſons and places, by whom and where the *Lord's-day* is not *holily* and *duly* obſerved.

CHAP. VI.

Directions how to end the Day with GOD.

WHEN you have walked with GOD from morning untill night, whether on a *common day*, a day of *Faſting*, or on the *Lord's-day*, according to the former directions: it remaineth that you *conclude* the day well, when you would give yourſelf to reſt at night. Wherefore

Firſt look back and take a ſtrict view of your whole carriage that *day paſt*. Reform what you find amiſs; and rejoice, or be grieved, as you find you have done well or ill, as you have advanced or declined in grace that day.

Secondly, ſince you cannot ſleep in ſafety, if *God*, who is your *keeper*, Pſa. cxxi. 4, 5. do not *wake, and watch for you*, Pſa. cxxvii. 1. and though you have *God* to watch when you ſleep; you cannot be ſafe, if he that watcheth be your

enemy. Wherefore it is very convenient, that at night, you not only *conclude the day* with your Family, by reading ſome Scripture, and by prayer; but you muſt *alone* renew and confirm your peace with GOD by faith and prayer, and with like preparations thereto, as you received directions for the morning: commending and committing yourſelf to GOD's tuition by *prayer*, Pſa. iii. 4, 5. Pſa. xcii. 2. with thankſgiving, before you go to bed. Then ſhall you *lye down in ſafety*, Pſa. iv. 8.

All this being done, yet while you are *putting off* your apparel, when you are *lying down*, and when you are *in bed*, before you ſleep, it is good that you *commune* with your *own heart*, Pſa. iv. 4. If other good and fit meditations offer not themſelves, ſome of theſe will be ſeaſonable.

1. When you ſee yourſelf *ſtript* of your apparel, conſider what you were at your *birth*, and what you ſhall be at your *death*, when you put off this earthly Tabernacle (if not in the mean time) as concerning your outward eſtate: how that *you brought nothing into this world, nor ſhall carry any thing out*, 1 Tim. vi. 7. *naked you came out of your mothers womb, and naked ſhall you return*, Job i. 21. This will be an excellent means to give you ſweet content in *any thing* you have, 1 Tim. vi. 8. though never *ſo little*, and in the loſs of what *you have had*, Job i. 21. though *never ſo much*.

2. When you lie down, you may think of lying down in your *winding ſheet*, and in your *grave*.

grave. For beſides that *ſleep*, 1 Cor. xi. 30. and the *bed* do aptly reſemble *death* and the *grave*, Iſa. lvii. 2. who knoweth when he ſleepeth that ever he ſhall *awake again* to this life?

3. You may think thus alſo: If the *Sun muſt not go down upon my wrath*, Eph. iv. 26. leaſt it become *hatred*, and ſo be worſe ere morning; then, it is not ſafe for me to lye down in the allowance of any ſin, leaſt I *ſleep not only the ſleep of natural death*, Pſa. xiii. 3. but of that death which is *eternal*; for who knoweth what a night will bring forth? Now, it is an high point of holy *wiſdom*, Deut. xxxii. 29. upon all opportunities to *think* of, and to prepare for your *latter end.*

4. Conſider likewiſe, that if you walk with GOD in uprightneſs, your death unto you is but to *fall into a ſweet ſleep, an entering into reſt, a reſting on your bed for a night*, Iſa. lvii. 2. untill the glorious morning of your happy Reſurrection.

5. Laſtly, if poſſibly you can, fall aſleep out of *ſome heavenly meditation.* Then will your ſleep be *more ſweet*, Pro. iii. 21, 24, 25. and *more ſecure*, Pro. vi. 21, 22. your *dreams* fewer, or more *comfortable*; your head will be *fuller* of good thoughts, Pro. vi. 22. and your heart will be in a *better frame* when you *awake*, whether in the night, or in the morning.

Thirdly, being thus prepared to ſleep; you ſhould ſleep only ſo much as the *preſent ſtate* of your body requireth; you muſt not be like the

ſluggard, *to love ſleep*, Pro. xx. 13. neither muſt you ſleep too much: for if you do, that (which being taken in its due meaſure, is a reſtorer of vigor and ſtrength to your body, and a quickner of the ſpirits) will make the ſpirits dull, the brain ſottiſh, and the whole body inactive, and unhealthy. And that which GOD hath ordained for a furtherance, through your ſin ſhall become an enemy to your bodily and ſpiritual *welfare*, Pro. vi. 6, 9, 10, 11. "Thus much "of *walking with God* in all things at all "times."

CHAP. VII.

How to Walk with GOD alone.

§. 1. THERE is no time wherein you will not be either *alone* or in *Company*, in either of which you muſt walk in all well-pleaſing, as in the ſight of GOD.

(1.) Rules concerning Solitude.

Concerning being *alone*. Firſt, *affect not too much ſolitude*; be not alone, except you have juſt cauſe, namely, when you ſeparate yourſelf for holy duties, and when your needful occaſions do withdraw you from ſociety; for in other caſes, *two are better than one* (ſaith *Solomon*) and *woe be to him that is alone*, Eccl. iv. 9, 10.

2. When you are *alone*, you muſt be very watchful, and ſtand upon your guard, leaſt you fall

fall into manifold temptations of the Devil. For *ſolitarineſs is Satan's opportunity*, Gen. iii. 1. Gen. xxxix. 11. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Mat. iv. 1. which he will not loſe, as the manifold examples in Scripture, and our daily experience doth witneſs. Wherefore you muſt have a ready eye to *obſerve*, and an heart ready bent to *reſiſt* all his aſſaults. And it will now the more concern you to keep cloſe to GOD, and not loſe his company; that through the weapons of your Chriſtian warfare, you may by the *power of God's might* quit yourſelf, and ſtand faſt, Eph. vi. 10, &c.

3. Take ſpecial heed, leaſt when you be *alone*, you, yourſelf, conceive, deviſe, or indulge any evil, to which your nature is then moſt prone.

And beware in particular, leaſt you commit *alone*, by yourſelf, *contemplative wickedneſs*, Mic. ii. 1. Pſal. xxxvi. 4. Mark xv. 28. which is, when by feeding your fancy, and pleaſing yourſelf in Covetous, Luſtful, Revengeful, Ambitious, or other wicked Thoughts, you act that in your *mind* and *phantaſy*, which either for fear, or ſhame, you dare not; or for want of opportunity or means, you cannot act *otherwiſe*.

4. When you are *alone*, be ſure that you are well and fully exerciſed about ſomething that is *good*, either in the *works of your calling*, or in *reading*, or in *holy meditation*, or *prayer*, For whenſoever *Satan* doth find you *idle* and out of imployment in ſome or other of thoſe works

which GOD hath appointed, Mat. xii. 44. he will take that as an opportunity to uſe you for himſelf, and to employ you in ſome of *his* works. But if you keep always in *your place*, and to ſome or other *good work* of your place; you are under GOD's ſpecial protection, as the Bird in the *Law* was, Deut. xxii. 6. while ſhe ſat upon her eggs or young ones, keeping her own neſt; in which caſe no man might hurt her.

I have already ſhewed how you ſhould behave yourſelf as in GOD's ſight, both in *prayer*, and in the works of your *calling*, I will ſay ſomething for your direction concerning *Reading*, and *Meditation*.

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§. II. *Of Reading.*

BESIDES your *ſet-times* of reading the holy Scriptures, you will do well to gain ſome time from your *vacant* hours, that you may *read* in GOD's Book, and in the good books of men.

(1.) Firſt, when you *read* any part of the *word of God*, you muſt put *a difference* between it and the beſt writings of men, preferring it far before them. To this end, (1.) Conſider it in its *properties* and *excellencies*. No word is of like abſolute *authority*, *holineſs*, *truth*, *wiſdom*, *power*, and *eternity*, Pſal. cvii. 10, 11. (2.) Conſider this *Word* in its *ends*, and *good effects*. No book aimeth at *God's glory*, John v. 39. 2 Cor. iii. 18. and the *Salvation of man's ſoul* like this; Rom.

Rom. xv. 4. James i. 21. none concerneth you like to this. It diſcovereth your *miſery* by ſin, together with the perfect *remedy*, Rom. iii. 23, 24. It propoſeth perfect *happineſs* unto you, Iſa. xxxv. 1, 3. affording means to *work it out* in you, and for you, Rom. i. 16. 1 Theſ. ii. 13. It is mighty through GOD to *prepare* you for grace, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. It is the immortal ſeed to *beget you unto Chriſt*, 1 Pet. i. 23. It is the *milk* and ſtronger meat *to nouriſh* you up in Chriſt, 1 Pet. ii. 2. Heb. v. 13, 14. It is as *ſoul phyſic* (through Chriſt Jeſus) to *recover* you, 2 Tim. i. 13. and to free you of all ſpiritual evils. By it Chriſt giveth *ſpiritual* ſight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, ſpeech to the dumb, ſtrength to the weak, health to the ſick: yea, by it he doth caſt out Devils, and raiſe men from the *death* of ſin (through faith) as certainly as he did all thoſe things for the bodies of men by the word of his power, while he lived on the earth, John v. 25. This *Book of God* doth contain thoſe many rich *Legacies* bequeathed to you in that laſt *Will and Teſtament of God*, ſealed with the blood of *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, Heb. ix: 15, 16, 17, 18. It is the *Magna Charta*, and Statute-book of the Kingdom of Heaven, Iſa. viii. 20. It is the book of *Priviledges* and *Immunities* of GOD's children, Rom. vi. 14, 22. 1 John v. 13. It is *the word of grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance amongſt all them that are ſanctified*, Acts xx. 32. For it will make you *wiſe to ſalvation*, 2 Tim.

iii. 15, 17. through faith in Chriſt Jeſus, making you perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good Works.

Whenever therefore you hear this Word *preached*, and when at any time you *read* it, you muſt *receive it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth the Word of God*, 1 Theſ. ii. 13. then it will *work effectually in you that believe*.

Secondly, when you read this Word, *lift up the heart in prayer to God* for the Spirit of Underſtanding and Wiſdom, Pſal. cxix. 18. that your mind may be more and more enlightened, and your heart more and more ſtrengthened with grace by it. For this Word is ſpiritual, containing the great Counſels of GOD for man's Salvation, and which is as a *book ſealed up*, Iſa. xxix. 11, 12. in reſpect of diſcovery of the *things of God* in it, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. to all that have not the help of GOD's Spirit; ſo that none can know the *inward* and *ſpiritual* meaning thereof, powerfully and ſavingly, but by the Spirit of GOD.

Thirdly, read the Word with an hunger and thirſt after *knowledge* and *growth of grace* by it, 1 Pet. ii. 2. with a reverent, humble, teachable, and *honeſt heart*, Luke viii. 15. believing all that you read; trembling at the threatnings and judgments againſt ſinners; rejoicing in the promiſes made unto, and the favours beſtowed upon the penitent, and the godly; willing and reſolving to obey all the Commandments.

Thus

Thus if you read, bleſſed ſhall you be in your *reading*, Rev. xxi. 3. and bleſſed ſhall you be in your *deed*, James i. 25.

The *holy Scriptures* are thus to be read *of all* of every ſort and condition, and of each ſex, for all are commanded to *ſearch the Scriptures*, John v. 39. as well the *Laity* as the *Clergy*, *women* as well as *men*, Acts xvii. 11, 12. *young* as well as *old*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. of *all Nations*, Iſa. xxxiv. 1,—16. For though the Spirit of God is able to work converſion and holineſs immediately *without* the Word, as he doth in thoſe infants that are ſaved, Rev. i. 3. yet in adult perſons the holy Ghoſt will not (where the Word may be had) work *without* it as his inſtrument, Luke xvi. 29. uſing it as the hammer, plough, ſeed, fire, water, ſword *, or as any other inſtrument to pull down, build up, plant, purge, or cleanſe the ſouls of men. For it is by the Word both *read* and preached, Rev. i. 3. that *Chriſt* doth *ſanctify* all that are his, John xvii. 17. Eph. v. 26, 27. *that he may preſent them to himſelf*, and ſo to his Father, *without ſpot or wrinkle*, a *Church moſt glorious*.

And whereas it is moſt true, that thoſe which are *unlearned* and *unſtable*, 2 Pet. iii. 16. do wreſt not only *hard Scriptures*, but *all other alſo, to their deſtruction*. Yet, let not this (as *Papiſts* would infer) cauſe you to *forbear* to read; any more, than, becauſe many ſurfeit and are

* They are Scripture Metaphors.

drunk

drunk by the beſt meats and drinks, you do forbear to eat and drink.

(2.) To prevent *miſunderſtanding* and *wreſting* of Scriptures to your hurt, do thus. (1.) Get and cheriſh an humble and honeſt heart, reſolved to *obey* what you know to be GOD's will: *If any man will do his will,* ſaith *Chriſt, he ſhall know of the doctrine whether it be of God,* John vii. 17. (2.) Get a clear knowledge of the *firſt Principles of Chriſtian Religion,* and believe them ſtedfaſtly. And endeavour to frame your life according unto thoſe *more eaſy* and *known* Scriptures, whereon theſe firſt principles of the Oracles of GOD are founded; for theſe give *light, even at the firſt entrance, unto the very ſimple,* Pſal. cxix. 130. This do, and you ſhall neither be *unlearned* in the myſteries of Chriſt, nor yet *unſtable* in his ways. (3.) Be much in *hearing the Word interpreted,* Iſa. viii. 20. by learned and faithful Miniſters. (4.) If you meet with a place of Scripture too hard for you, preſume not to frame a ſenſe to it of your *own head*; but take notice of your ignorance, admire the depth of GOD's wiſdom, ſuſpend your opinion, and take the firſt opportunity to aſk the meaning of ſome or other, of thoſe *whoſe lips ſhould preſerve knowledge,* Mal. ii. 7.

Let no colourable pretence keep you from diligent *reading* of GOD's Book; for hereby you will be better prepared to hear the Word preached. For it layeth a foundation for preaching, Acts viii. 28, 34, 35. leading the way

to

to a better underſtanding thereof, and more eaſily preſerving it in memory; alſo to enable you to *try the Spirits* and Doctrines delivered, Acts xvii. 11. 1 John iv. 1. 1 Theſ. v. 21. even to try all things, and to cleave to that which is good.

1. In reading mens writings, read the *beſt*, or at leaſt thoſe by which you can *profit* moſt.

2. Read a good book *thoroughly*, and with due conſideration.

3. Reject not *haſtily* any thing you read, becauſe of the *mean* opinion you have of the author. Believe not every thing you read, becauſe of the *great* opinion you have of him that wrote it. But (in all books of faith and manners) *try all things by the Scriptures*, Iſa. viii. 20. Mark xxii. 29, 31. Receive nothing upon the bare teſtimony or judgment of any man, any further than he can confirm it by the *Canon of God's holy Word*, Luke x. 26. or by evidence of *reaſon*, or by undoubted *experience*; provided always that what you call reaſon and experience, be according unto, *not againſt* the Word of GOD. If the meaneſt ſpeak according to it, then receive and regard it: but if the moſt judicious in your eſteem, yea *if he were an Angel of GOD* ſhould ſpeak or write otherwiſe, *refuſe*, and *reject* it, Gal. i. 8.

Thus much for private *reading*.

Only take this *Caution*. You muſt not think it to be ſufficient that you *read* the Scriptures and other good books at home in *private*, when

by

by ſo doing you neglect the *hearing* of the Word read, and preached in *public*. For God hath not appointed, that reading alone, or preaching alone, or Prayer, or Sacraments ſhould ſingly and alone ſave any man, where *all*, or *more than one* of them may be had; but he requireth the joint uſe of them *all* in their place and time. And in this variety of means of ſalvation, God hath in his holy Wiſdom ordained ſuch Order, that the excellency, and ſufficiency of *one*, ſhall not, in its right uſe, keep any from, but lead him unto a due performance of the *other*; each ſerving to make the other more effectual to produce their common effect, namely, the *Salvation* of Man's Soul.

Indeed, when a man is neceſſarily hindred by perſecution, ſickneſs, or otherwiſe, that he cannot *hear* the Word preached, then God doth bleſs *reading* with an humble and honeſt heart, without hearing the Word preached. But where hearing the Word preached, is either *contemned* or *neglected* for reading ſake, or for prayer ſake, Pro. xxviii. 9. or for any other good private duty, there, no man can expect to be bleſſed in his reading, or in any other private duty, but rather curſed. Witneſs the evil effects, which by experience we ſee to iſſue from thence, *viz. Self-conceitedneſs*, *Singularity* in ſome dangerous Opinions; and *Schiſm*, and too often, a falling away into *damnable Hereſies* and *Apoſtacy*.

§. III.

§. III. *Of Meditation.*

WHEN you are alone, then alſo is a fit ſeaſon for you to be employed in holy *Meditation*. For according to a Perſons Meditations, ſuch is he. *The liberal man deviſeth liberal things; the covetous man the contrary*, Iſa. xxxii. 8. The godly man *ſtudieth* how to pleaſe God, the wicked how to pleaſe himſelf.

In *Meditation* the mind or reaſon of the ſoul fixeth itſelf upon ſomething conceived or thought upon for the *better underſtanding* thereof, and for the *better application* of it to itſelf for uſe.

(1.) In *meditating* aright, the mind of man exerciſeth *two* kind of acts; the one *direct* upon the thing meditated; the other *reflex* upon himſelf, the perſon meditating. The firſt is an act of the *contemplative part of the underſtanding*; the ſecond is an act of *Conſcience*. The end of the firſt is to *enlighten the mind* with knowledge: the end of the ſecond is to *fill the heart* with goodneſs. The firſt ſerveth (I ſpeak of moral actions) *to find out the rule* whereby you may know more clearly, what is truth, what is falſhood, what is good, what is bad; whom you ſhould obey, and what manner of Perſon you ſhould be, and what you ſhould do, and the like: The ſecond ſerveth to direct you how *to make a right and profitable application* of yourſelf, and of your actions to the *Rule*.

In

In this latter are these two acts. First, an *Examination* whether you and your actions be according to the Rule, or whether you come short, or are swerved from it, giving judgment of you, according as it findeth you.

The second is a *perswasive and commanding act*, charging the soul in every faculty, understanding, will, affections, yea, the whole man, to reform and conform themselves to the *Rule*, that is, to the *Will of God*, if so be you find yourself not to think and act according to it: which is done by *confessing* the fault to God with remorse, *praying* for forgiveness, *returning* to God by faith and repentance, *reforming* the heart and life thro' new obedience. This must be the resolution of the soul. And all this a man must charge upon himself peremptorily, commanding himself with sincere desire and fixed endeavour to conform to it.

When you *meditate*, join all these *three acts*, else you will never bring your meditation to a *profitable* issue. For if you only muse and study to find out what is true, what is false, what is good, what is bad, you may gain much *knowledge of the head*, but little *goodness to your heart*. If you only apply to yourself that whereon you have mused, and *no more*; you may by finding yourself to be a transgressor, lay guilt upon your conscience, and terror upon your heart *without fruit* or *comfort*: but if to these two you lay a charge upon yourself to *follow God's counsel* concerning what you should believe

and

and do, when you have offended him: if you alſo form an upright deſign (through GOD's grace) to be ſuch a one as you *ought* to be, and to live ſuch a life hereafter as you ought to live; then unto *ſcience* you add *conſcience*, and to *knowledge* you join *practice*, and will find the comfortable and happy effects thereof. Obſerve *David's* meditations, and you will find they came to this iſſue. His *thoughts* of GOD and of his ways, made him *turn his feet unto God's teſtimonies*, Pſal. cxix. 59. The *meditation* of GOD's benefits made him reſolve to *take the cup of ſalvation, and call upon the name of the Lord*, and to *pay his vows*, Pſal. cxvi. 12, 13, 14. When he conſidered what GOD had done *for* him, and thence inferred what he ſhould be *to* GOD again, he ſaith to his ſoul, *my ſoul and all that is in me, praiſe his holy Name*, Pſal. ciii. 1, 2, 3. When in his meditation he found that it was his fault to have his ſoul diſquieted in him through diſtruſt, he chargeth it to wait on GOD, and raiſeth up himſelf unto an holy confidence, Pſal. xlii. 5, 11. *I will meditate on thy precepts* (ſaith he.) What, is that all? no, but he proceedeth to this laſt act of meditation, and ſaith, *I will have reſpect unto thy ways*, Pſal. cxix. 15, 16, 106.

(2.) GOD's holy *Nature*, *Attributes*, *Word*, *Works*, alſo what is *duty*, and what is *ſin*; what you ſhould *be*, and *do*; what you *are*, and what you *have* done, what are the *miſeries* of the wicked, and what are the *happineſs* and *priviledges* of the righteous, are fit *ſubjects of meditation*.

(3.) That

(3.) That which muſt ſettle your Judgment and be the *Rule* to direct you what to hold for true and good, muſt be the *Canon of God's Word* rightly underſtood, 2 Pet. i. 19. and not your own reaſon or opinion: nor yet the opinions or conceits of men; for theſe are *falſe* and *crooked Rules*.

(4.) In ſeeking to know the ſecrets and myſteries of GOD and godlineſs, you muſt not *pry into* them farther than GOD hath revealed; for if you wade therein farther than you have ſure footing in his holy Word, you will preſently *loſe* yourſelf and be ſwallowed up in a *maze*, and whirl-pool of errors and hereſies. Theſe *deep things of God muſt be underſtood with ſobriety*, Pſal. cxxxi. 1. Rom. xii. 3. according to that clear light which GOD hath given you by his Word.

(5.) When *Sin* happeneth to be the *matter* of your meditation, take head leaſt while your *thoughts* dwell upon it (through your intention to bring yourſelf out of love with it) it ſteals into your *affections*, and work in you ſome ſecret liking to it, and ſo circumvent you. For the *cunning devices of ſin* are undiſcoverable, Eccl. vii. 24, 26, 28. and you know that your heart is *deceitful* above all things, Jer. xvii. 9. Wherefore to prevent this miſchief; (1.) As *ſin is not to be named*, Eph. v. 3. but when there is juſt cauſe, ſo it is not to be *thought upon*, but upon ſpecial cauſe, namely, when it ſheweth itſelf in its *motions*, and *evil effects*, and when it concerns you to *try* and *find* out the wickedneſs of your heart and life. (2.) When there is cauſe to think of

ſin,

ſin, repreſent it to your mind as an *evil*, *the greateſt evil*, Gen. xxxix. 9. moſt loathſome, and abominable to GOD, and moſt hateful and hurtful to yourſelf. Whereupon you muſt raiſe your heart to an holy deteſtation of it, and reſolution againſt it. (3.) Never ſtand *reaſoning* or *diſputing* with it, (as *Eve* did with Satan) Gen. iii. 2, 3. but without any indulgence of it, you muſt do preſent execution upon it, by ſheathing the *Word of God*, *the Sword of the Spirit*, Mat. iv. 4, 7, 10. into the heart of it; and by *mortifying* of it through the help of his *Spirit*, Rom. viii. 13. And if you would dwell long in meditating upon any ſubject, make choice of matter *more pleaſant*, and *leſs infectious*.

(6.) It is neceſſary that you be ſkilful in this *firſt* part of meditation, for hereby you find out, who is to be adored, who not; what is to be done, what not; what you ſhould be, what not. But the *life of meditation* lyeth in the *reflex acts* of the ſoul, whereby that knowledge which was gotten by the former act of meditation, doth *reflect*, and *return upon the heart*, 2 Chro. vi. 37. cauſing you to *apply to yourſelf* what was propoſed; whence alſo you are induced to endeavour to form your heart and life according to that which you have learned it *ought* to be.

This, though it be *moſt profitable*; yet, becauſe it is tedious to the fleſh, is *moſt neglected*. Wherefore it concerneth you which are inſtructed in the points of faith and holineſs, to be moſt

moſt converſant in this when you are *alone*, whether it be when you are engaged in the common buſineſs of life, or retirement for ſolemn worſhip.

(7.) You ſhould therefore *be well read in the book of your Conſcience*, as well as *in the Bible*, 1 Cor. xi. 28, 31. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Commune often with it, and it will fully acquaint you with yourſelf, and with your eſtate, (through the Light of GOD's holy Spirit.) It will tell you what you *were*, and what you *now* are; what you moſt delighted in, in *former* times, and what *now*. It will tell you what *ſtreights* and *fears* you have been in, and how graciouſly GOD *delivered* you; what *temptations* you have had, and how it came to paſs, that ſometimes you were overcome by them; and how, and by what means you overcame them. It will ſhew what *conflicts* you have had betwixt Fleſh and Spirit, and what was the *iſſue* thereof, Pſal. lxxvii. 1, 13. whether you were grieved and humbled when ſin got the better; and whether you rejoiced and were thankful when GOD's grace reſtrained you, or gave you the victory. Your conſcience being ſet on work, will call to remembrance your *over-ſights*; and the *advantages* which you gave to Satan and to the luſts of your fleſh, that you may not do the like again. It will remember you by what *helps* and *means* (through GOD's grace) you prevailed and got a conqueſt over ſin, that you may uſe the ſame another time. If you thus diligently obſerve the

paſſages

paſſages and conflicts of your Chriſtian race and warfare, your knowledge will be an *experimental knowledge*; which, becauſe it is a knowledge ariſing from the frequent *proof* of that whereof you were taught in the Word; it becometh a more fixed, perfect, and fruitful knowledge than *that of meer contemplation.*

It is only this *experimental* knowledge that will make you *ſkilful* in the duties and trials of the Chriſtian Life. Take a man that hath only read much of *Huſbandry*, *Phyſic*, *Merchandiſe*, *Policy*, &c. who hath *gotten into his head* the *notions* of all theſe, and maketh himſelf believe that he hath great ſkill in them: yet one that hath not read half ſo much, but hath been of *long practice*, and of *great experience* in theſe, as far excelleth him in Huſbandry, Phyſic, Trading, &c. as he excelleth one that is a meer novice in them. Such difference there is between one that hath only a *ſuperficial* knowledge of Chriſtianity, without *experimental* obſervation; and him that is often looking into the *Records* of his own *Conſcience*, carefully obſerving the workings of his own heart, and GOD's diſpenſations towards him.

The *experience* which by this means you will obtain (of GOD's love, truth, and power; of your *enemies* faſhood, wiles, and methods; of your *own* weakneſs without GOD, and of your ſtrength by GOD to withſtand the greateſt luſts, and ſtrongeſt temptations; yea, of an ability to do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthened you)

will

will beget in you, faith and confidence in God, and love to him, watchfulneſs and circumſpection, leaſt you be overtaken with ſin; with ſuch degrees of humility, wiſdom, and Chriſtian courage, that no oppoſition ſhall daunt you, nor ſhake your confidence in Chriſt Jeſus.

Where do you read of two ſuch *Champions* as *David* and *Paul?* 2 Sam. xvii. 36. 2 Tim. i. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 17, 18. and where do you find two that recorded, and made ſuch uſe of their experiences of God's truth and goodneſs like theſe?

Wherefore next to *God's book*, which giveth light and rule to your Conſcience, read often the *book of your Conſcience.* See what is there written for, or againſt you. When you find that your *heart* and *life* is according to the *rule of God's Word*; hold that faſt to your *comfort*; but, wherein you find *yourſelf* not to be according to *this rule*, give yourſelf no reſt, untill in ſome good meaſure, at leaſt in endeavour, you *do live* according to it.

I have inſiſted the more largely on this point of *meditation*, becauſe of the great neceſſity, and profitableneſs of it; many of God's people omit it, becauſe they know not how to *do* it; and becauſe they know not their *need*, nor yet the *benefit* which they may receive from it.

(9.) The *neceſſity* and *uſe* of meditation will appear, if you conſider, 1. That reading, hearing, and tranſient thoughts of the beſt things leave

leave not half that impreſſion of *goodneſs* upon the ſoul, which they would do, if they might be *recalled*, and fixed there by ſerious thought. Without this *meditation*, the good food of the ſoul paſſeth thorough the underſtanding, and either is quite loſt, or is like raw and undigeſted food; which doth *not nouriſh* thoſe creatures that chew the cud, till they have fetched it back and chewed it better. Meditation is inſtead of chewing the cud. All the outward means of Salvation do little good in compariſon, except by *meditation* they are thoroughly *conſidered, and laid up in the heart.*

2d. The great *Uſefulneſs* of *Meditation* appears in that, (1.) It doth digeſt, ingraft, and turn the ſpiritual knowledge gained in GOD's word and ordinances, into the very life and ſubſtance of the ſoul, changing and faſhioning you according to it, ſo that GOD's will in his Word and your will become one, chooſing and delighting in the ſame things. (2.) Meditation fitteth for prayer, nothing more. (3.) Meditation alſo promoteth the practice of godlineſs, nothing more. (4.) Nothing doth perfect and make a man an underſtanding Chriſtian more than this. (5.) Nothing doth make a man know and enjoy himſelf with inward comfort, nor is a clearer evidence that he is in a ſtate of happineſs, than this. For *in the multitude of my thoughts within me* (ſaith *David* to GOD) *thy comforts delight my ſoul*, Pſal. xciv. 19. And he doth by the

the Spirit of GOD pronouce every man *bleſſed*, that doth thus *meditate in God's Law Day and Night*, Pſal. i. 2.

CHAP. VIII.

§. I. *Of Company in General, Rules concerning it.*

WHEN you are in *company*, of what ſort ſoever, you muſt amongſt them *walk with God.*

Directions relating hereunto are of two ſorts. Firſt, ſhewing *how you ſhould behave towards all*: Secondly, how towards *good* or *bad* company.

Firſt, in whatſoever *company* you are, your Converſation in word and deed muſt be ſuch, as may procure (1.) *Glory to God*, Mat. v. 16. (2.) *Credit to Religion*, 1 Tim. vi. 1. (3.) *All mutual, lawful content, help, and true benefit to each other*, Gen. ii. 18. For theſe are the ends, firſt, of *ſociety*; ſecondly, of the variety *of the good gifts that GOD hath given unto men* to do good with, 1 Cor. xii. 7, 25.

To attain theſe ends, your converſation muſt be, 1. *holy*; 2. *humble*; 3. *wiſe*; 4. *loving*.

Firſt, it muſt be *holy*, 1 Pet. i. 15. you muſt, as much as in you is, prevent all evil ſpeech and behaviour, which might elſe break forth, being careful to break it off, if it be already began in your company. Suffer not the *Name* and *Religion of God*, nor yet your *brother's name*

to

to be traduced, or evil ſpoken of; but in due place, and manner, vindicate each. Be diligent to watch, and improve all fit opportunities of introducing *pious* and *uſeful* converſation; even whatſoever may tend to the practice, and increaſe of godlineſs and honeſty.

Secondly, your converſation muſt be *humble*. You muſt give *all due reſpect* to all men, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Eph. v. 21. according to their ſeveral places, and gifts; reverencing your *betters*, ſubmitting to all in *authority* over you. Eſteeming *others* as better than yourſelves, Phil. ii. 3. in honour preferring them before you. Condeſcending unto, and behaving reſpectfully towards thoſe of *meaner* rank, Rom. xii. 16.

Thirdly, you muſt be *wiſe and diſcreet* in your carriage towards all, and that in diverſe particulars.

(1.) Be not too open, nor too reſerved. Not *over ſuſpicious*, 1 Cor. xiii. 7. nor *over credulous*, John ii. 24. Jer. xl. 14, 15, 16. For the *ſimple believeth every word, but the prudent looketh well to his going*, Prov. xiv. 15.

(2.) Apply yourſelf to the ſeveral conditions and diſpoſitions of men in all *indifferent* things, ſo far as you may without ſin againſt God, or offence to your brother, *becoming all things to all men*, 1 Cor. ix. 19, 20, 23. ſuiting yourſelf to them in ſuch a maner, that if it be poſſible, you may live in *peace with them*, Rom. xii. 18. and and may gain ſome *intereſt* in them to do them good.

But far be it from you to do as many, who, under this pretence, are for all companies; ſeeming *religious* with thoſe that be religious; but prophane and licentious with thoſe that are prophane and licentious: for this is carnal policy, and damnable hypocriſy, and not true wiſdom.

(3.) *Intermeddle not with other mens buſineſs*, 1 Theſ. iv. 11. but upon due and neceſſary occaſion.

(4.) Know when to *ſpeak*, and when to be ſilent, 1 Tim. v. 13. *How excellent is a word ſpoken in ſeaſon?* Eccl. iii. 7. As either ſpeech or ſilence will make for the glory of God, and for the cauſe of Religion, and good one of another, ſo ſpeak, and ſo *hold your peace*, Prov. xv. 23. Prov. xxv. 11.

(5.) Be not *haſty to ſpeak*, Prov. xxix. 11. nor be *much in ſpeaking*, Prov. xvii. 27. Eccl. x. 14. but only when juſt cauſe ſhall require; for as it is *ſhame and folly to a man to anſwer a matter before he hear it*, Prov. xviii. 13. ſo is it for any to ſpeak before his *time*, and turn, Job &c. Likewiſe conſider, that in the *multitude of words there wanteth not ſin*; but *he that refraineth his lips is wiſe*, Prov. x. 19.

(6.) Be ſparing to ſpeak of *yourſelf*, or *actions*, to your own praiſe, *except in caſe of neceſſary Apology*, 2 Cor. xii. 11. and defence of God's cauſe maintained by you, and in the clearing of your wronged innocency, or needful manifeſtation of God's power and grace in you; but then it

muſt

muſt be with *all modeſty, giving the praiſe unto God*, Phil. iv. 12, 13. Neither muſt you cuningly hunt for *praiſe* by debaſing or excuſing yourſelf and actions, that you may give occaſion to draw forth commendations of yourſelf from others. Thus ſeeking of *applauſe*, argueth pride and folly. But, do praiſe worthy actions, ſeeking therein the praiſe of GOD, that GOD may be glorified in you, then you ſhall have *praiſe of God*, Rom. ii. 29. whatſoever you have of *man*. Howſoever, follow *Solomon's* rule; *Let another praiſe thee, not thine own mouth; a ſtranger, and not thine own lips*, Prov. xxvii. 2.

(7.) As you muſt be wiſe in your carriage toward others, ſo you muſt be wiſe for *yourſelf*; which is to make a *good uſe* to yourſelf of all things that occur in company. Let the *good you ſee* be matter of joy, and thankfulneſs to GOD, and improved for your own *imitation*, Rom. xii. 9. Let *the evil you ſee* be matter of *grief* and humiliation, and a warning to you, leaſt you commit the like, ſince you are made of the ſame mould that others are, and are liable to the ſame temptations. If men report *good of you to your face*, repreſs thoſe ſpeeches as ſoon, and as wiſely as you can, *giving the praiſe of all things to God*, Gen. xli. 15, 16. Act. xii. 23. knowing that this is but a *temptation, and a ſnare*, Prov. xxvii. 14. and a means to breed ſelf-love, pride and vain-glory in you. If this *good report* be *true, bleſs God that he hath enabled you to deſerve it, and ſtudy by virtuous living to conti-*

nue it. If this *good report be* falſe, *endeavour to make it good* by being hereafter anſwerable to the report.

(8.) If men *report evil of you to your face*; be not ſo much inquiſitive who raiſed it, or how to confute them, or to clear your reputation amongſt men; as to make a *good uſe* of it to your own heart before GOD.

For you muſt know, *this evil report doth not riſe without God's Providence*, 2 Sam. xvi. 11. If the report be *true*, then ſee GOD's good Providence, it is that you may ſee your error and failings, that you may repent. If the report be *falſe*, yet conſider, if you have not run into the *appearance* and *occaſions of thoſe evils?* then ſay, though this report be falſe, yet it cometh *juſtly* upon me, becauſe I did not ſhun the *occaſions* and *appearances*. This ſhould humble you, and cauſe you to be more circumſpect in your ways. But if *neither the thing reported be true, nor you have given occaſion for it*, yet ſee GOD's wiſe and good Providence; not only in diſcovering the folly and malice of evil men; who raiſe and take up an evil report againſt you *without cauſe*; but in giving you warning to look to yourſelf, leaſt you *deſerve* thus to be ſpoken of. And how do you know, but that you ſhould have fallen into the ſame, or the like evil, if *by theſe reports you had not been fore-warned?* Make uſe therefore of the railings and *reviling* of an enemy, 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11, 12. though he be a *bad Judge*, yet he may be a *good Remembrancer*; for you ſhall

hear

hear from him thoſe things of which *flatterers* will not, and *friends* being blinded, or over-indulgent through love, do never admoniſh you.

Fourthly, your converſation amongſt all muſt be *loving*; you ſhould be kind and *courteous* towards all men, Tit. iii. 2. Do *good* to all, according as you have ability and opportunity, Gal. vi. 10. Give *offence* willingly to none, 1 Cor. x. 32. Do *wrong* to no man, 1 Cor. vi. 1, 7, 8. either in his name, life, chaſtity, or eſtate, or in any thing that is his; but be ready to *forgive* wrongs done to you, Col. iii. 13. and to *take* wrong rather than to revenge, or unchriſtianly to ſeek your own vindication. As you have calling and opportunity, do all good to the *ſoul* of your neighbours; *exhort* and encourage unto well-doing, 1 Theſ. v. 14. If they ſhew not themſelves to be *dogs and ſwine*, Mat. vii. 6. that is, obſtinate ſcorners of good men, and contemners of the *pearl* of good counſel, you muſt ſo far as *God* giveth you any intereſt in them, *admoniſh* and inform them with the ſpirit of meekneſs and wiſdom, Lev. xix. 17. With this *cloak of love* you ſhould cover and cure a multitude of your companions infirmities and offences, 1 Pet. iv. 8. In all your behaviour towards him, ſeek not ſo much to *pleaſe yourſelf*, as your *Companion*, in that which is good to his edification, Rom. xv. 2.

(1.) *Speak evil of no man*, Tit. iii. 2. nor yet ſpeak the evil you know of any man, except in theſe or the like caſes. (1.) When you are there-

unto lawfully called by Authority. (2.) When it is *to thoſe whom it concerneth, to reform* and reclaim him of whom you ſpeak, and that you do it to that end, 1 Cor. i. 11. (3.) When it is to prevent certain *damage* to the ſoul or eſtate of your neighbour, Acts xxiii. 16, which would enſue, if it were not by you thus diſcovered. (4.) When the concealment of his evil may make you *guilty* and *acceſſary*. (5.) When ſome particular remarkable judgment of GOD is upon a notorious ſinner for his ſin, then, to the end that GOD may be *acknowledged* in his juſt judgments, and that others may be *warned*, or brought to repent of the ſame or like ſin, you may ſpeak *of the evils* of other, Pſal. lii. 6. But this is *not to ſpeak evil*, ſo long as you do it not in *envy* and *malice* to his perſon, nor with *aggravation* of the fault more than is cauſe, nor yet to the *judging* of him as concerning his final eſtate.

(2.) When you ſhall *hear* any in your company *ſpeak evil* of your neighbour, by ſlandering, whiſpering or tale-bearing; whereby he detracts from his good name, you muſt not only ſtop your ears at ſuch reports; but muſt ſet your ſpeech and countenance againſt him, like a *North-wind* againſt rain, Prov. xxv. 23.

(3.) When you hear another *well reported* of, let it not be grievous to you, as if it detracted from your credit; but *rejoice at it*, inſomuch that GOD hath enabled him to be good, and to do good; all which maketh for the advancement of the common cauſe of religion, wherein you

you are intereſted: Envy him not therefore his due praiſe.

(4.) *Detract not* from any man's credit, either by open back-biting, Pſal. xv. 3. or by ſecret whiſpering, Prov. xvi. 28. or by any cunning means of caſting evil aſperſions, whether by way of pitying him, or otherwiſe: As, *he is good*, or *doth well* in ſuch and ſuch things; *but*, &c. This *but* marreth all.

(5.) And, in a word, in all ſpeeches to men, and communication with them, your ſpeech muſt be *gracious*, Col. iv. 6. that which is *good to the uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter grace*, not vice *to the hearers*. It muſt not be *prophane*, nor any way *corrupt*, Eph. iv. 29. defiled with oaths, curſes, or prophane jeſts; it muſt not be *flattering*, Job xvii. 5. nor yet detracting: Not *bitter*, Eph. iv. 31. not railing, cenſorious, or injurious to any man, Eph. v. 3, 4. It muſt not be *wanton*, Col. iii. 8. laſcivious and filthy. It muſt not be *falſe*, Col. iii. 9. no nor yet *fooliſh*, 1 Cor. xv. 33. idle, and fruitleſs: For all *evil communication doth corrupt good manners*. And, *we muſt anſwer for every idle word which we ſpeak*, Mat. xii. 36. Beſides, a man may eaſily be diſcerned of what Country he is, whether of Heaven, or of the Earth, by his language; *his ſpeech will bewray him*.

(6.) There is no wiſdom or power here below can teach and enable you to do all, or any of the fore-mentioned duties. This *wiſdom* and power muſt be had from *above*, James iii. 13,

to 18. Wherefore if you would in all companies carry yourſelf worthy the Goſpel of Chriſt:

Firſt, be ſure that the *Law of God*, and the *Power of Grace* be in your heart, elſe the *Law of Grace and Kindneſs* cannot be in your life and ſpeech, Pſal. xxxvii. 30, 31. Prov. xxxi. 26. You muſt be indued therefore with a ſpirit of holineſs, humility, love, gentleneſs, long-ſuffering, meekneſs, and wiſdom; elſe you can never converſe with all men as you ought to do. For ſuch as *the heart* is, ſuch the *converſation* will be. *Out of the evil heart come evil thoughts and actions*, Mat. xv. 19. but *a good man, out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things*, and *according to the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, Mat. xii. 34, 35. A man muſt have the *heart* of the wiſe, before the *tongue* can be taught to ſpeak wiſely, Prov. xvi. 23.

Secondly, you muſt reſolve before-hand (as *David* did) to *take heed to your ways, that you ſin not with your tongue*, Pſal. xxxix. 1. And that you will *keep your mouth as with a bridle.* And before your ſpeech and actions, be well adviſed; weigh and ponder in the ballance of reaſon, all your actions and words, before you vent them.

Thirdly, let no *paſſion* of joy, grief, fear, anger, &c. get the head, and exceed their limits. For wiſe and good men, as well as bad, when they have been in any of theſe paſſions, have *ſpoken unadviſedly* with their lips, Job iii. 3, 23. Pſal. cvi. 32, 33. Mark ix. 5, 6. Jona. iv. 8, 9.

iv. 8, 9. Mark vi. 22, 23. And experience will teach you, that your tongue doth *never run before your wit*, ſo ſoon, as when you are *over-feared, over-grieved, over-angry, or over-joyed.*

Fourthly, you muſt be much in *prayer* unto GOD, *before* you come into company, that you may be able to order your converſation aright: Let your heart alſo be lifted up often to GOD when you are *in* company, that he would *ſet a watch before your mouth, and keep the door of your lips, and that your heart may not incline to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity*, Pſal. cxli. 3, 4. and that he would *open your lips, that your mouth may ſhew forth his praiſe*, Pſal. li. 15. and that you may *ſpeak as you ought to ſpeak, knowing how to anſwer every man*, Col. iv. 6. for the tongue is ſuch an unruly evil, that *no man, but God only, can tame* and govern it, James iii. 8.

§. II. *Cautions and Directions concerning evil Company.*

WHEN *Company is evil or ſinful* (if you may chooſe) *come not into it at all*, Prov. i. 15. Prov. xxiii. 20. Pſal. xxvi. 4, 5. For keeping evil company, will (1.) blemiſh your name. (2.) It will expoſe you often to many *hazards* of your *life* and ſtate, 1 Kings xxii. 29, 31, 32. 2 Chron. xviii. 31. and xxii. 6, 8, 9. Gen. xiv. 11, 12. And (3.) you are always in danger to

be corrupted by the *contagious infection* of it, Prov. xxii. 24, 25.

By *bad* company, I do not only underſtand *ſeducers*, and ſuch as are *openly prophane* or riotous; but alſo ſuch *civil men*, who yet remain meer worldlings, and *all luke-warm profeſſors*, who are ſtrangers to the life and power of religion. For although the ſins of theſe latter, do not carry ſuch a manifeſt appearance of *groſs* impiety and diſhoneſty, as thoſe of open Blaſphemers, Drunkards, Adulterers, and the like; yet they are not leſs dangerous; your heart will quickly riſe againſt theſe manifeſt *enormous* evils: but the other, by reaſon of their *unſuſpected* danger, through that tolerable good opinion which (in compariſon) is had of them, will ſooner *inſnare* and *infect* you, by an inſenſible chilling of your ſpirits, and by taking off the edge of your zeal towards the power of godlineſs: And ſo by little and little draw you to a *remiſneſs*, and *indifference* in Religion, and to a love of the world.

If you ſhall think, that by keeping *evil* company, you may *convert* them, and draw them to goodneſs; be not deceived: It is preſumption ſo to think. Hath not God expreſly *forbidden* you ſuch company? Prov. xxiii. 20. If you be not neceſſarily called to be in ſinful company, you may juſtly fear that you ſhall be ſooner *perverted*, Pſal. cvi. 34, 35. and *made evil* by their wickedneſs, than that they ſhould be *converted* and *made good* by your holineſs.

Secondly,

Secondly, when by reaſon of common occaſions in reſpect of the affairs of your calling, generally, or particular, in Church, Commonwealth, and Family, you cannot ſhun *ill* company; (1.) Be ſpecially watchful that your *converſation be honeſt*, 1 Theſ. iv. 12. *unblameable*, and *harmleſs*, Phil. ii. 15, 16. Eph. v. 15, 16. *even with a Dove-like innocency*, Mat. x. 16. that by your *good example*, they may *without the Word* be brought to love the power and ſincerity of that true Religion which you profeſs, 1 Pet. iii. 1. Howſoever, *give no advantage to the adverſary to ſpeak evil*, 1 Tim. v. 14. either of you, or of your Religion; but, by a holy life, *ſtop the mouths of ignorant and fooliſh men*, 1 Pet. ii. 15. or if they will notwithſtanding ſpeak againſt you; let your holy life *ſhame all that blame your good converſation in Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Pet. iii. 16. (2.) Be *wiſe as ſerpents*, Col. iv. 5. Mat. x. 16. Walk cautiouſly, leaſt they bring you into temporal evils and inconveniences; but eſpecially leaſt they infect you with their ſin; for *a little leaven will quickly leaven the whole lump*, 1 Cor. v. 6.

That you may not be *infected* by that ill company which you cannot avoid; uſe theſe preſervatives: (1.) Be not *high minded*, Rom. xi. 20. *but fear*, leaſt you do commit the ſame or the like ſin; for you are of the ſame nature, and are ſubject to the ſame, or the like temptations. He that ſeeth his neighbour ſlip and fall before him, had need to *take heed leaſt he himſelf fall*,

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1 Cor. x. 12. (2.) Your *ſoul* (like righteous *Lot*) *muſt be vexed daily with ſeeing and hearing their unlawful deeds*, 2 Pet. ii. 8. Pſal. cxix. 136, 158. (3.) Raiſe your heart to a ſenſible *loathing of their ſin*; yet have *compaſſion on the ſinner*, Jude 22, 23. and, ſo far as you have opportunity, *admoniſh him as a brother*, 2 Theſ. iii. 14, 15. (4.) When you ſee or hear any wickedneſs, lift up your heart to GOD, and before him *confeſs it, and diſclaim all liking of it*, Pſal. cxx. 5, 6. pray unto GOD to keep you from it, and that he would forgive your companion his ſin, and give unto him grace to repent of it.

Laſtly, though you may converſe with *ſinful* company (when your calling is to be with them) in a common and colder kind of fellowſhip, by a common love, whereby you wiſh well to all, and would do good to all; yet you muſt not converſe with them with ſuch *ſpecial*, and *intimate Chriſtian familiarity*, and *delight*, Pſal. xvi. 3. as you do with the *Saints that are excellent*. Thus do, and the Lord can and will keep you in the midſt of *Egypt*, and *Babel*, as he did *Joſeph*, and *Daniel*, if he call you to it.

Thirdly, as ſoon as poſſibly you can, *depart out of their company, when you find not in them the lips of knowledge*, Prov. xiv. 7. or when they any way declare that they have only a *form, but deny the power of godlineſs*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. *From ſuch turn away*, ſaith the Apoſtle. And ſo uſe the preſervatives preſcribed, or any other as prudence

dence ſhall direct, that you depart not *more evil*, or *leſs good*, then when you came together.

§. III. *Directions for Chriſtian-Fellowſhip.*

NOW concerning good company, or Chriſtian-fellowſhip, Firſt, *highly eſteem* of it, Pſal. xvi. 3. and much deſire it. For you ſhould *love the brotherhood*, 1 Pet. ii. 17. howſoever the world ſcoff at it; and *forſake not the fellowſhip*, Heb. x. 25. or the company of the godly, as the manner of ſome is: But (with *David*) as much as may be, *be a companion with them that fear God*, Pſal. cxix. 63.

Secondly, when you are in *good* company, you muſt expreſs all *brotherly love*; improving your time together for your mutual good, chiefly in the increaſe of each others *faith* and *holineſs*, Rom. i. 11, 12. *provoking one another to love, and to good works*, Heb. x. 24.

Then is your Chriſtian *love* of the right kind, (1.) when you love them out of a *pure heart fervently*, 1 Pet. i. 22. which is, when you love them, becauſe they are brethren, *partakers* of the ſame Faith and Spirit of Adoption, Heb. iii. 1. having the ſame Father, and being the ſame *houſhold of faith* with you, Gal. vi. 10. (2.) When you love them not only with *a love of humanity*, as they are men, (for ſo you ſhould love all men, even your enemies;) nor yet only with *a common love of Chriſtianity*, wherewith you love

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all profeſſing true Religion, though actually they ſhew little-fruit and power thereof; but with a *ſpecial love*; 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 Pet. iv. 8. for *kind*, ſpiritual; and for *degree*, more abundant. Therefore it is called *brotherly kindneſs*, Rom. xii. 10. and a fervent love, diſtinct from charity, or a *common love*, 2 Pet. i. 7.

Where this *love* is, it will unite hearts together, like *Jonathans* and *Davids*, 1 Sam. xviii. 1. making you to be of *one heart and ſoul*, Acts iv. 32. It will make you enjoy each others ſociety with ſpiritual *delight*, Pſal. xvi. 3. It will make you to ſympathiſe with one another; and to *bear each others burthens*, Gal. vi. 2. It will make you to communicate in all things communicable, with gladneſs, and *ſingleneſs of heart*, Acts ii. 46. as you are able, and that with a *ſpecial love*, Gal. vi. 10. beyond that which you ſhew to them which are not alike excellent. Yea it is ſo intire and ſo ardent, that you will not hold your *life* to be too dear, to lay down for the common good of the brethren, 1 John iii. 16.

When therefore you meet with thoſe that fear God, improve the *Communion of Saints*, not only by communicating in *natural*, and temporal good things as you are able, and as there is need; but eſpecially in the communion of things *ſpiritual*, *edifying yourſelves in your moſt holy faith*, Jude 20. 1 Theſ. v. 11. by holy ſpeech and conference, and (in due time and place) in reading the holy *Scriptures* and good Books, and by prayer,

prayer, and *ſinging of Pſalms together*, Col. iii. 16.

That your *ſinging* may pleaſe GOD, and edify yourſelf and others, obſerve theſe rules,

1. *Sing* as in GOD's *ſight*, and, in matter of prayer and praiſe ſpeak to GOD in ſinging, Pſal. xxx. 4.

2. The *matter* of your Song muſt be *ſpiritual*, either indited by the Spirit, or compoſed of matter agreeing thereunto, Col. iii. 16.

3. You muſt ſing with *underſtanding*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

4. You muſt ſing with *judgment*, being able in private to make choice of *Pſalms* ſuitable to the preſent time and occaſion; and both in private and publie to apply the *Pſalm* ſung to your own particular caſe, only taking heed that you do not apply the imprecations made againſt the enemies of Chriſt and *his* Church in general, to *your* enemies in particular; alſo endeavour to confirm your *faith*, and incline your *will* and *affections* according to the ſubject of your Pſalmody, whether you ſing the propheſies of Chriſt, his promiſes, threats, commands, mercies, or judgments, &c.

5. You muſt make melody to the Lord in your *heart*, Col. iii. 16. which is done (1.) by preparing and ſetting the heart in tune, Pſal. lvii. 7. it muſt be an *honeſt* heart: (2.) the heart muſt be *lifted up*, Pſal. xxv. 1. (3.) the mind *intentive*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. (4.) the affections *lively*, Pſal. xxxiii. 3. Rev. xiv. 3. (the heart *believing*)

believing) and, in matter of praiſe and thanks, *joyous*, Pſal. lxxxiv. 1.

6. Loſe not your ſhort, and precious time, with *idle* complements, *worldly* diſcourſe, or talk of *other* mens matters and faults, 1 Tim. v. 13. nor yet in a *barren* and *fruitleſs* hearing and telling of news, Acts xvii. 21. out of affectation of *ſtrangeneſs*, and *novelty*. But let the matter of your talk be, either of *God*, or of his *Word*, and *Ways* wherein you ſhould walk; or of his *works* of *Creation*, *Preſervation*, *Redemption*, *Sanctification*, and *Salvation*; of his *Judgments* which he executeth in the world, and of his *mercies* ſhewed towards his people: or matter of Chriſtian *advice*, either of the things of this life, or of that which is to come. Impart alſo each to other the *experience* and proofs you have had of *God's grace* and *power*, in your *Chriſtian warfare*. And (as there ſhall be cauſe) *exhort*, *admoniſh*, *and comfort one another*, 1 Theſ. v. 11, 14.

To do all theſe well, will require *ſpecial godly wiſdom*, *humility*, and *love*. If theſe three be in you and abound, your ſociety will be profitable: The ſtrong will not *deſpiſe* the weak, neither will the weak *judge* the ſtrong, Rom. xiv. 1, 3. You will be far from *putting a ſtumbling block, or an occaſion to fall in your brothers way, but you will follow after the things which make for peace*, and things *wherewith you may edify one another*, 1 John ii. 10. Rom. xiv. 13, 19. You will then *bear* with each others infirmities, Rom. xv. 1, 2, 3.

1, 2, 3. and not ſeek to *pleaſe yourſelf*, but *your neighbour*, for his good to edification.

You muſt firſt be *wiſe* to make choice, not only of ſuch matter of ſpeech as is *good* and lawful, but ſuch as is *fit*, conſidering the condition and need of thoſe before whom you ſpeak. In propoſing queſtions, you muſt not only take heed that they be not *vain*, *fooliſh*, and *needleſs*, 2 Tim. ii. 23. ſuch as *engender ſtrife*, Tit. iii. 9. and do *miniſter and multiply queſtions*, *rather than godly edifying*, 1 Tim. i. 4. but you muſt be careful that they be *fit*, and *pertinent*, both in reſpect of the *perſon to whom* they are propoſed, and in reſpect of the *perſon or perſons before whom* they muſt be anſwered.

Some men have *ſpecial gifts* for one purpoſe, ſome for another. Some for *interpreting* Scripture; ſome for *deciding* of controverſies, ſome for *diſcovering* Satan's methods and enterprizes; ſome are excellent for *comforting*, and *curing* afflicted and wounded conſciences; ſome are better ſkilled and more exerciſed in one thing, than in another. And ſome alſo of GOD's dear children, as they are not able to bear *all exerciſes of Religion*, Mat. ix. 15, 16, 17. ſo neither are they capable of hearing and profiting *by all kind of diſcourſes of Religion*, Heb. v. 11, 12, 13. If this were wiſely obſerved, Chriſtian conference would be much more uſeful, than uſually it is.

Secondly, you muſt be *lowly minded*, and of an humble ſpirit, not *preſuming* above your gifts and calling, Rom. xii. 3. When you ſpeak of

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the things of *God*, be reverent, ſerious, and ſober, keeping yourſelf within your *line*, 2 Cor. x. 13. both of your *calling*, and the *meaſure of the knowledge and grace* which God hath given you; ſpeaking poſitively, and confidently only of thoſe things which you *clearly* underſtand, and whereof you have *experience*, or *ſure proof*. Think not yourſelf too good to *learn* of any, Acts xviii. 26. neither harden your neck againſt the *admonitions* and *reproofs* of any. If you have an *humble* heart, you will do as *David* did, when he was admoniſhed and adviſed by a woman. He ſaw *God* in it, and *bleſſed him for it*, he received the good counſel, and bleſſed her that gave it. *Now bleſſed be God which hath ſent thee to meet me this day* (ſaid he) *and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood, &c.* 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.

Thirdly, there will be need of the exerciſe of much *fervent love*, and charity, even amongſt the beſt. For as *Satan* hath malice againſt all *good company*, and *good conference*, he will infuſe matters of difference, and diſcord. And becauſe the beſt men differ in opinion, (though not in *fundamentals*, yet) in *Ceremonies*, and leſs neceſſary points of Religion; and for as much as they all have *infirmities*, and, while the remains of corrupt nature are in them, are ſubject and apt to *miſtake* and *miſconſtrue* one anothers actions and ſpeeches, you will need that this bond of love be ſtrong, that it be not broke aſunder by any

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of theſe, or other ſuch means; but that you remain ſtrongly and ſweetly knit together *in the unity of the Spirit, through this bond of peace*, Ephe. iv. 3.

I eſpecially commend this Chriſtian ſociety in *brotherly love*, 1 John iii. 14. becauſe, 1. there is nothing giveth a more ſenſible evidence of converſion, and *tranſlation from death to life* than this. 2. Nothing doth more aſſiſt the *increaſe and power of godlineſs* in any place or perſon than this, Acts ii. 44, to 47. Acts iv. 32, 33. For, let it be obſerved, though there be never ſuch an excellent Miniſter in any place; you will ſee little improvement in grace amongſt the people, until many of them become of *one* heart; ſhewing it by *conſorting together* in Chriſtian fellowſhip, in the Communion of Saints. 3. Nothing bringeth more ſenſible joy, comfort, and delight (next the *communion with God in Chriſt*) than the *actual communion of Saints*, and love of brethren, Pſal. xvi. 3. Acts ii. 46, 47. It is the beginning of that happineſs on *earth*, which ſhall be perfected in *Heaven*. It is for *kind the ſame*, only differing *in degrees*.

And, to conclude this ſubject, after you have been in *company, good or bad*, it will be worth your while to examine how far you have *hindred* any evil in others, and have *preſerved* yourſelf from evil: how far you have endeavoured to *do good* to others, and how much you have gained in knowledge, ſerious affection, zeal, or any other good grace, by your *company*; and according

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ing as you find, let your conscience reprove or comfort you.

CHAP. IX.

§. I. *Rules for our Religious Conduct in Prosperity.*

WHEN at any time you *prosper* in any thing and have *good success*, that you may therein walk according to GOD's word

First, take heed of committing those *sins* whereto the nature of man is most addicted, when his heart is satiated with prosperity.

Secondly, be careful to produce those *good effects*, which are the principal ends why GOD giveth good success.

1st. The *sins* especially to be watched against, are (1.) *denying of God*, Prov. xxx. 9. by *forgetting* him and his ways, Deut. vi. 12. *departing* from him, Deut. xxxii. 15. when you are waxen fat like *Jesurun*, taking the more *license* to sin, Job xxi. 14. by how much you prosper the more in the world. (2.) *Ascribing the praise* of success to *yourself* or to *second causes*, Dan. iv. 30. Hab. i. 15, 16. sacrificing to your own net. (3.) *High mindedness*, 1 Tim. vi. 17. thinking too well of yourself, because you have that which others have not, and despising and thinking too meanly of those, which *have not* what you possess, 1 Cor. xi. 22. (4.) If riches increase,

crease, or if you thrive in any other earthly thing, *set not your heart thereon*, Psal. lxii. 10. 1 Tim. vi. 17. either in taking too much *delight* therein, Job xxxi. 25. or in trusting thereto. Holy *Job* and good *David* were in some particulars overtaken with this fault. When *Job* was prospered, he entertained this secure conceit, that he should *die in his nest, and multiply his days as the sand*, Job xxix. 18. And *David* in his *prosperity* said, *he should never be moved*, Psal. xxx. 6. But the LORD by afflictions taught them both to know by experience, how vain all earthly things are to trust unto, and ingeniously to confess their error.

2d. I reduce the *good effects*, which are the principal ends why GOD giveth good success, unto these two heads: (1.) professed *praise* and *thankfulness* to *God*. (2.) Real *proofs* of the said thankfulness, in well using and imploying this good success for GOD.

§. II. *Motives to Praise and Thankfulness.*

FIRST, *praise* and *thank* GOD. For (1.) it is the *chief* and most lasting service and worship, which GOD hath required of you. (2.) It is *most due*, Psal. xxix. 2. and due to him only, he only is *worthy*, Rev. iv. 11. Rev. v. 12. for *of him are all things*, Rom. xi. 36. and he is called the *God of Praises*. (3.) It is the end why GOD doth declare his *excellency* and *goodness*, both

both in his *Word* and *Works*, Prov. xvi. 4. that it may be matter of *praiſe* and *thankſgiving*, alſo why he hath given man an *heart* to underſtand, and a *tongue* to ſpeak, that for them, and with them, as by apt inſtruments they might *acknowledge* his goodneſs, and excellency; thinking, and ſpeaking to his praiſe and glory. Wherefore *David* ſpeaking to his heart, or tongue, or both; when he would give thanks, ſaith, *Awake my glory, and I will give praiſe*, Pſal. lvii. 8. compared with Pſal. xvi. 9. and Acts ii. 26. Pſal. cviii. 1. (4.) There is not any ſervice of GOD more *beneficial* to man, than to be thankful, 1 Tim. iv. 4. For it maketh thoſe gifts of GOD which are good in *themſelves*, to be good *to you*, and they are the beſt *preſervatives* of good things to you; nay, thankfulneſs for former bleſſings, are real requeſts for *farther* favours, as well as the *beſt ſecurity* you enjoy, Phil. iv. 6, 7. for GOD will not withdraw his goodneſs from the *thankful*.

This Praiſe and Thankſgiving is a religious ſervice, wherein a man maketh known to God, that he acknowledgeth every good thing to come from him, and that he is worthy of all praiſe and glory for the infinite excellency of his Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, and all his other holy and bleſſed Attributes, manifeſt in his Word and Works; and that he is beholden to God for all that he hath had, now hath, and which he ſtill hopeth to enjoy.

Praiſe and *Thankſgiving* go together, and do differ only in ſome reſpect. The *ſuper-abundant*

excellency

excellency in God, shewed by his Titles and Works, is the *object of praise*. The *abundant goodness of God*, 1 Chro. xxix. 11, 12, 13. Psal. viii. 1,—9. shewed in his Titles and Works, to his Church, to you, or to any person, or thing to which you have reference, is the *object*, and *matter of your thanks*, 1 Chro. xxix. 14.

(2.) Directions for Thanksgiving.

These following things concerning *praise* and *thanksgiving*, are needful to be known and observed.

First, *who* must give praise and thanks? Namely, *you*, and *all* that have *understanding and breath*, must praise the Lord, Psal. cl. 6.

Secondly, *to whom* praise and thanksgiving are due? *Only to God*, Psal. l. 14. Psal. cxv. 1. *Not to us, not to us* (saith the *Church*) *but to thy Name give glory.*

Thirdly, *by whom* must this Sacrifice of thankfulness be offered? Even *by Christ only*, Eph. v. 20. Heb. xiii. 15. the only high Priest of our Profession, out of whose *golden Censor* our prayers and praises ascend, and are acceptable to God, as *Incense*, Rev. viii. 3, 4.

Fourthly, *for what* must we praise God and give him thanks? We must praise him *in all his works*, be they for us, or against us; we must thank him *for all things* spiritual and temporal wherein he is any way good unto us, Eph. v. 20.

Fifthly, *with what* must we praise and thank him? Even *with our souls, and all that is within us, and with all that we have*, Psal. ciii. 1. We must

muſt praiſe and thank God with the inward man, praiſe him with the *Spirit*, and with the *underſtanding*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. praiſe him with the *will*, praiſe and thank him with all the *affections*, with love, deſire, joy, and gladneſs; praiſe him with the *whole heart*. We muſt likewiſe praiſe him with the *outward* man, both with *tongue* and hands, Pſal. xxxv. 28. our words and our deeds muſt ſhew forth his praiſe. When our thanks are cordial, and real, then they make a good harmony, and ſweet melody, moſt pleaſant in the ears of God.

Sixthly, *when* muſt we give thanks? *Always*, Morning, Evening, Noon, at all times, as *long as we live and have any being*, we muſt praiſe him, Eph. v. 20. Pſal. lv. 17. Pſal. cxix. 164. Pſal. civ. 33.

Seventhly, *how much?* We muſt praiſe and thank him *abundantly*, Pſal. xlviii. 1. We muſt endeavour to proportion our praiſe to his worthineſs and goodneſs: As we muſt love him, ſo we muſt thank him with *all* our ſoul, and with all our ſtrength.

(3.) The evil of *unthankfulneſs*, and diſſwaſives againſt it.

There is no ſin more common than *unthankfulneſs*, Luke xvii. 17, 18. for ſcarce one of *ten* give thanks to God for his benefits, and thoſe which do give thanks, beſides many errors in thankſgiving, do not thank God for *one* mercy in twenty. Many in diſtreſs will *pray, or cry, and howl* at leaſt, Hoſea vii. 14. as they of old,

for

for Corn, and Oil, but who returneth proportionable *praises* to his *prayers?* Whereas the Christian should be *oftener in thanks*, than *in prayers*, Psal. lix. 10. because God preventeth our prayers with his good gifts a thousand ways.

Take heed therefore that you be not *unthankful.* It is a most base, hateful, and damnable sin. For he that is unthankful to *God*, is (1.) A most *dishonest* and *disloyal* man, he is injurious to *God*, in detaining from him his due, in not paying him his *Tribute*. (2.) He is *foolish* and *improvident* for himself; for by not paying his tribute of thankfulness, and doing this homage, he *forfeits* all that he hath into the *Lord's* hands, Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. Hos. ii. 8, 9. which forfeiture many times he *taketh*: But if he do not presently take the forfeiture, it will prove worse to the *unthankful* in the end. For prosperity, without a *thankful* heart, always *increaseth sin*, Hos. iv. 7. Rom. i. 21. and prepares a man for greater destruction. The more such a one thrives, the more doth *pride*, *hard-heartedness*, and many other *evil* lusts grow in him. This *unthankfulness* is the highway to be given over to *a reprobate sense*, Rom. i. 21, to 29. *Such prosperity always proves a snare, and endeth in utter ruin*, Psal. lxix. 22. *For the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*, Prov. i. 32. And *when the wicked prosper, it is but like sheep put into fat pastures, that they may be prepared for the slaughter*, Jer. xii. 1, 2, 3. An *unthankful* man is, of all men, most *unfit* for to go to *heaven.* Heaven

can be no heaven to him: for there is *praising* of GOD continually. Now to whom *thanksgiving* and singing of the praises of GOD is *tedious*, to him *heaven cannot be joyous*.

It doth concern you therefore, that you be much and often in *thanksgiving* and *praise* unto GOD. To this end, attend to these directions: (1.) Stir up your heart to holy *resolution* and *longing* desire so to do. (2.) Beware of, and remove *impediments* to thankfulness. (3.) Improve all the means of gaining such a frame of mind.

(4.) First, consider that *gratitude* and *thankfulness* is the *best service*, being the end of all other worship; and is *God's* due; and is the *end* why *God* giving matter, and means *by* which and *for* which, we should be thankful; and that nothing is more *beneficial* than thankfulness, nor any thing more *mischievous* than unthankfulness, as hath been already shewed; consider also, that hearty and constant *thankfulness* is a testimony of *uprightness*; it doth excellently *become the upright to be thankful*, Psal. xxxiii. 1. It is *all the homage* and all the service which *God* requireth at your hands, for all the good that he bestoweth on you. It is *pleasant and delightful*, Psal. cxlvii. 1. It is *possible* and easy through the grace of GOD's Spirit. It is a *small matter*, to what GOD might exact; even as an *homage-penny*, or *pepper-corn*. Thankfulness doth *elevate* and *enlarge* the soul, making it fruitful in good works, beyond any other duty. For the *thankful* man (with *David*) is often consulting with

with himſelf *what he ſhall render to the Lord for all his benefits to him*, Pſal. cxvi. 12. Laſtly, this ſpiritual praiſe and thanks to GOD by Chriſt, is the *beginning of heaven upon earth*, being part of that communion and fellowſhip which ſaints and angels have with GOD above. It is that *everlaſting ſervice* which endureth for ever.

(5.) Not only ſtir up your ſoul to this great duty of praiſe and thankſgiving, but carefully ſhun all the *impediments* thereunto. Amongſt many take heed eſpecially of theſe, (1.) *Ignorance*, (2.) *Pride*, (3.) *Forgetfulneſs*, (4.) *Doubting of God's love*, (5.) *Undue affection to the benefits received*, eſpecially to ſuch as are temporal.

Firſt, If you are *ignorant* of the excellency and worth of GOD's good gift, or if you *miſprize* things, preferring natural, temporal, or common gifts, before ſpiritual, eternal, and ſpecial graces, peculiar to GOD's children, you will either give *no thanks* at all; (for who can give thanks for that which he eſteemeth worth little or nothing?) or if you do give thanks, it will be *prepoſterous*, giving thanks for temporal bleſſings ſooner, and more, than for ſpiritual, and eternal. Moreover, though you do know each good gift according to its due value; yet if, through *ignorance*, you *miſtake* the Giver, you will beſtow your thanks upon *men*, and ſecond cauſes: *but not on God*, who is the *Giver of every good and perfect gift*, James i. 17.

Secondly, If you be *proud* and highly conceited of your own worth and good deſervings, you

will expect matters otherwise, than GOD will think fit to give; as *Naaman* did, before he was cleansed, 2 Kings v. 11, 12. and when you miss of your expectation, you will be so far from thanks, that you will murmur and complain.

Thirdly, Though you know the *worth* of the gift, and do acknowledge the *Giver*; and also think yourself *unworthy* of the gift; yet if you have not these in *actual remembrance*; if you have *forgotten* them, and they be out of mind, how can you be duly thankful? Therefore when *David* calleth upon himself to be thankful, he saith, *forget not all his benefits*, Psal. ciii. 2.

Fourthly, Suppose that you know well the worth of the gift, and do judge yourself unworthy of it, and remember well that you received it of GOD; yet if through *misbelief* and *doubting of God's love*, you think that GOD doth not give it to you *in love* and *mercy*, but in wrath, as he gave *Israel a King*, Hos. xiii. 11. your heart will sink, and be so clogged with this fear, that you cannot raise it up to praise and thankfulness, for any gift which you conceive to be *so* given.

Fifthly, Suppose that you are free from all the former impediments; yet, if you be *over eagerly affected with the gift*, you will in a kind of *over joyedness* be so taken up with it, that (as little children, when their parents give them sweet-meats, or such things as they most delight in, fall to eating of the sweet-meat, and run away for joy, before ever they have shewn any sign

sign of thankfulness) so you will easily be overtaken in this kind, and *neglect* God that gave it.

(6.) Helps to thankfulness.

The *helps to* thankfulness, are most of them directly contrary to the former hindrances; of which, take these:

First, Get *sound knowledge of God*, and of his *infinite excellencies*, Psal. 8. and *absoluteness* every way, Mat. vi. 13. Rom. xi. 36. and of his independency on man, or any other creature: whence it is that he *needeth not* any thing that man hath, Psal. l. 12, 15. 1 Chro. xxix. 14, 15, 16. or can do, neither can he be beholden to man: But know that you must stand in *need* of *God*, Acts xiv. 17. Acts xvii. 28. and must be beholden to him for all things. Know also that whatsoever *God* doth, by whatsoever means it be, he doth it *from himself*, Isa. xliii. 25. Hos. xiii. 4. Hos. xiv. 4. induced by nothing out of himself, being free in all that he doth. Know likewise, that whatsoever was the *instrument* of your good, *God* was the *Author* of both the good and the instrument, Jam. i. 17.

Next, get a clear understanding of the *full worth* and *excellent use* of God's gifts, both common, and special. Wealth, honour, liberty, health, life, senses, reason, &c. considered *in themselves*, and in their *use*, will be esteemed to be great benefits; but if you consider them in their absence, when you are sensible of poverty, sickness, and the rest; or if you be so blessed, that you know not the want of them; then if

you conſiderately and humbly look upon the poor, baſe, impriſoned, captives, ſick, deaf, blind, dumb, diſtracted, &c. *Putting yourſelf in their caſe* you will ſay that you are unſpeakably *beholden to* GOD for theſe corporal and temporal bleſſings, Heb. xiii. 3.

But chiefly learn to know, and conſider well, the worth of *ſpiritual* bleſſings: *One of them*, the *peace of God*, paſſeth all underſtanding, Phil. iv. 7. To enjoy the Goſpel upon any terms, to have *ſalvation*, *ſuch a ſalvation*, offered by *Chriſt*, to have *faith*, *hope*, *love*, and other the manifold ſaving graces of the *Spirit*, though but in the *leaſt* meaſure, in the very *firſt ſeed of the Spirit*, though no bigger then a *grain of Muſtard-ſeed*, Luke xvii. 6. with never *ſo much* outward affliction, is of ſuch ineſtimable value, and conſequence, that it is more than *eye hath ſeen*, *ear hath heard*, *or ever entred into the heart of man*, 1 Cor. ii. 9. For beſides that the *leaſt grace* is invaluable in itſelf; it is alſo the evidence of *better gifts*, namely, that *God* hath given you his *Spirit*, hath given you *Chriſt*, and, in him, hath given *himſelf*, a propitious and gracious *God*, and with himſelf hath given you *all things*, Rom. viii. 32. When you know *God* aright, and his gifts aright, knowing all things in *God*, and *God* in all things, then you will be full of *praiſes* and *thanks*.

Secondly, Be *humble and baſe in your own eyes*, 1 Chro. xxix. 13, 14. Let all things be baſe in your eyes, in compariſon of *God*, account them

them *worthleſs* and helpleſs things without him, Pſal. cxlvi. 1, 3. Pſal. xxxiii. 16, 17. Judge yourſelf to be, as indeed you are, *leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies*, Gen. xxxii. 10. For what are you of yourſelf, but a compound of duſt and ſin, *unworthy* any good, *deſerving* of all miſery? You ſtand in need of *God*, but not he of you; *It is his mercy that you are not conſumed*, Jam. iii. 22. When you are thus ſenſible of your own need, and that help can come only from GOD, and that you are worthy of *no good thing*; then you will be glad and thankful at heart to GOD for *any thing*. An *humble* man will be more thankful for the leaſt mercy, than a *proud* man will for the greateſt.

Thirdly, *Frequently reflect upon the infinite excellencies of God, and his great benefits.* Commune with your ſoul, and cauſe it to repreſent lively to your thoughts, what *God* is in himſelf, what to his *Church*, and to you, *how precious his thoughts are to you-ward*, Pſal. cxxxix. 17. Conſider often what *God hath done*, and what he *will* do for your ſoul, Pſal. xl. 5. Call to mind with what *variety* of good gifts he doth enrich his Church, and hath bleſſed you: and you will find that they will paſs all account and number. When alſo you conſider that *God* is *free* in all his gifts to you, who are unworthy the leaſt of them; if you would thus dwell upon theſe, and ſuch like thoughts, they would excite in you an holy *rapture*, and *admiration*, cauſing you to break out with *David* into theſe or the like praiſes:

Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Pſal. 8. I thank thee, I praiſe thee, I devote myſelf, as *my beſt ſacrifice* to thee, Rom. xii. 1. I will bleſs thy Name for ever and ever.

Fourthly, *Be perſwaded of God's love to you in theſe good things, which he giveth unto you:* Firſt, he *loveth you as his creature*, and if only in that reſpect he doth preſerve you, and do you good, you are bound to *thank* him. Secondly, you know not but God may love you with a *ſpecial love to Salvation*; *God's revealed will* profeſſeth as much, for you muſt not meddle with that which is *ſecret*, 1 John iii. 16. 1 Tim. ii. 4. I am ſure he giveth all-ſufficient *proof* of his love, making offers of it to you; and which you are daily receiving the *tokens of*, both in means of this life, and that which is to come. Did not he *love you*, when out of his free and everlaſting good will towards you, *he gave his Son to die for you, that you believing in him, ſhould not die, but have everlaſting life?* John iii. 16. What though you are yet in your ſins? Doth he not command you to *return to him?* Hoſ. xiv. 2, 4. and hath he not ſaid, *he will love you freely?* What though you cannot turn to to him, nor love him as you *would?* yet apply by humble faith to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as your only Saviour and great Phyſician, and endeavour in the uſe of all good means, to be, and do, as God will have you; then doubt not but that God doth *love* you; and patiently wait,

wait, till you see it in the performance of all his gracious promises unto you.

(7.) Signs to know when God giveth good things in love.

But if you would consider things aright, you may possibly know with certainty, that the good things you have received of God, are bestowed *in love* to you; I will only ask these *Questions:* Hath God's mercies excited you to labour more diligently to *please him well* in all things? have you had a will to be *thankful* upon the consideration thereof? or if you find a defect and barrenness herein; hath not this unfruitful and unthankful receiving of blessings from God, been a great *burden* and *grief* of heart to you? If so, this is an evident *sign* that *God* gave those good things to you *in love*, because this holy and good effect is wrought in you by them. Again; *do you love God?* would *you love God*, and his ways, and Ordinances yet more? This proveth that *God loveth you*; for *no man can love God, till God hath first loved him*, 1 John iv. 10, 19. Likewise, do you love the *children of God?* 1 John iv. 7. Then certainly you are God's child, and are *beloved of God*; by these things you have proof of your *calling* and *election*, that you are now *translated from death to life*, 1 John iii. 14. so that, though God may give you some things in *anger*, as a father giveth correction, yet he never giveth any thing *in hatred and in wrath*, as he doth to his enemies. *All things work together for good to them that love God*, Rom.

viii. 28. therefore whatſoever he giveth to ſuch, *is in love.*

5. Fifthly, *Prefer the honour and glory of God before, and above things* that may be beneficial to yourſelf: prefer likewiſe the *kindneſs, and love of God* in the gift, far above the *gift itſelf*; then you will never be ſo taken up with the enjoyment of the *gift*, as to forget to give praiſe and thanks to the *Giver.*

6. Sixthly, unto the former helps add this: Lay an holy command upon your ſoul, and ſtrictly *charge yourſelf to be thankful*; and, ſince you have ſuch good reaſon for it, make no excuſes againſt it, but ſay with *David, Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name, &c.* Pſal. ciii. 1.

Laſtly, to all other means, *join earneſt prayer to God, to give you a thankful heart.* It is not all the *reaſons* you can alledge for it, nor all the moral *perſwaſions* you can propoſe to yourſelf can effect it, (though theſe be good means, yea, God's means:) yet if you go about to raiſe your heart to it, in the power of your *own might*, all will be in vain. For as you cannot *pray* but by God's Spirit, ſo neither can you *give thanks* but by the ſame Spirit. Therefore, ſay as *David* did: *Renew (O Lord) a right ſpirit in me*; and *open my lips, that my mouth may ſhew forth thy praiſe*, Pſal. li. 10, 15.

§. II.

§. II. *Of the* real Proofs *of Gratitude and Thankfulneſs to God.*

IT is not enough to profeſs and utter praiſe and thanks to GOD; but you muſt give real *proof* thereof.

Firſt, *by devoting and giving yourſelf to God*, Rom. xii. 1. to be at the will of him, who is your *Sovereign Lord*, who giveth you all that you have, who is always giving unto you, and always doing you good, *paying your vows to him* that performs his promiſes to you, Pſal. cxvi. 14. Let it appear that you acknowledge him to be ſuch a one, *as you ſay in your praiſes*, and that you ſtand obliged and beholden to him indeed, *as you ſay in your thanks*, in that both in the frame of your heart, and the conduct of your life, you behave towards him as One who only is *Excellent*, who only is *God*, who is *your God*, the *God* of your *life* and *ſalvation*; and that, in all holy ſervice. For *Thanks-living* is the beſt way of *Thankſgiving*, and it is a divine ſaying, *The good life of the Thankful, is the life of Thankfulneſs.* Wherefore let every new mercy quicken your reſolution to perſevere and increaſe in well-doing, ſerving GOD ſo much the more *with gladneſs of heart, becauſe of the abundance of all things*, Deut. xxviii. 47.

Secondly, *Do good* with thoſe bleſſings, which GOD giveth you. For every *good gift is given to a man to profit withal*, 1 Cor. xii. 7. not only *himſelf*,

himſelf, but every *member of that body*, whereof he is part. Whatſoever good gift GOD hath given you, whether temporal, or ſpiritual, it muſt be imployed to *God's glory*, and to your *neighbour's good*, as well as to your own, as you have opportunity. If *riches* (and the ſame rule will ſerve for health, ſtrength, wiſdom, ſkill, &c.) be given to you, you muſt *honour God* therewith, Prov. iii. 9. and as *God doth proſper you in any thing, you muſt communicate to them that need*, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. as to the poor, ſick, weak, ſimple, and ignorant. If GOD give knowledge, faith, ſpiritual wiſdom, ability to pray, or any other of his rich graces, you muſt not hoard them up, and keep them reſerved for your own private benefit; but you muſt *communicate them* to others, and *improve* them for the promoting their ſpiritual good, and edifying them in faith, hope, and love.

By *communicating* your goods and common gifts of GOD in this ſort, you make yourſelf *friends* with them, Luke xvi. 9. againſt a day of need; and when you *honour* GOD, and *do good* with the talents which GOD putteth into your hand, then you make the beſt *improvement* of them. He who thus walketh with GOD *in proſperity*, ſhall certainly find him to be his *ſure friend in adverſity*, and when he ſhall be put out of his Stewardſhip at death, then *he ſhall be received into the everlaſting habitations*, Luke xvi. 9. When, the *more* you proſper, the *better* you deſire and endeavour to be, and do *more good*, this

is

is an infallible proof of true *thankfulneſs*, and is an evident ſign that you walk with GOD in proſperity as he would have you.

Give all diligence therefore, to learn this leſſon, *how to be full, and how to abound*, Phil. iv. 12. but know can it be learned no where but *in Chriſt's School*, and can never be practiſed but *by Chriſt's ſtrength*. This is it which the *Apoſtle* had learned, and ſaid, he was *able to do it through Chriſt that ſtrengthened him*, Phil. iv. 12, 13. It is a moſt needful and high point of learning, *to be inſtructed, and to know, every where, and in every thing, how to be full and to abound:* of the two, it is more rare, and difficult, than to know *how to be abaſed, and to ſuffer want*, which ſhall be the ſubject of the next *Chapter*.

CHAP. X.

§. I. *Directions for Walking with GOD under Afflictions.*

EVERY day will bring forth its *evil*, and croſs, Mat. vi. 34. whether *lighter* and ordinary, or more *heavy* and extraordinary. The *firſt* ſort riſeth partly from the *common frailties* of the *perſons* with whom you converſe, and partly from *your own*, as from pride and peviſhneſs, and ſuſpicion of evil, &c. Such as diſcourteſies from thoſe of whom you expected *kindneſs*; imperiouſneſs, and too much domineering of *ſuperiours*;

periours; ſullenneſs, negligence, and diſregard from *inferiours*; and aukwardneſs and perverſneſs in the perſons and things with which you *have to do.*

(1.) Rules concerning theſe following:

1ſt. Lay not theſe to heart, *make them not greater than they be* through your *impatience*, (as many do) who, upon every light occaſion of diſlike, caſt themſelves into ſuch an *Hell* of vexation and diſcontent, that all the bleſſings they enjoy, are ſcarcely obſerved, or can make their lives comfortable. Whereas Wiſdom ſhould *prevent*, and Love and Prudence ſhould *cover* and *paſs by* moſt of theſe; ſeeing, as if you ſaw not: or if you will give way to any paſſion at theſe, let it be with hatred of *their* and *your ſin*, which is the cauſe of theſe, and all other croſſes.

2d. Theſe ſhould cauſe you to *pity*, and *pray for* them that give you this offence, and for yourſelf, who many times without cauſe take offence. You may (if need require) ſhew your diſlike, and admoniſh the offender, provided you do it with *meekneſs of wiſdom*, Jam. iii. 13. but learn hereby to warn yourſelf, that you give not the *like* offence.

(2.) Directions how to bear all Afflictions well.

But whether your croſſes and afflictions be *imaginary* only or *real*; whether from God *immediately*, or from *man*; whether *light* or *heavy*, follow theſe directions: 1. Be not tranſported with *paſſion* and *anger* like *proud Lamech*, Gen. iv. 23,

iv. 23, 24. and *froward Jonas*, Jonas iv. 7, 8, 9. 2. Be not overwhelmed, or ſullen with *grief*, like *covetous Ahab*, 1 Kings xxi. 4. and *fooliſh Nabal*, 1 Sam. xxv. 37. But, 3. *Bear them patiently.* 4. *Bear them chearfully and thankfully.* 5. *Bear them fruitfully.*

1ſt. Remedies againſt ſinful Anger.

To help you, that *paſſion* and heat of *anger* kindle not, or at leaſt break not out beyond due bounds.

Firſt, Convince your judgment thoroughly, that paſſion and raſh anger is *forbidden* and hated of GOD, Mat. v. 22. Eccl. vii. 9. It is a fruit of the *fleſh*, Gal. v. 20. A work of the *Devil*, James iii. 14, 15. Bred and nouriſhed by *pride*, Prov. xxi. 24. *folly*, Prov. 14. 29. and *ſelf-love*, Jonas iv. 1, 2, 3. Alſo that it ſurpriſeth all the powers of right reaſon, putting a man *beſides* himſelf, cauſing him to abuſe his tongue, hands, and the whole man; making him like a fool, to caſt firebrands at every thing which croſſeth him, and that not only againſt his neighbour and *deareſt friends*, 1 Sam. xx. 30, 33. but againſt *God himſelf*, Jon. iv. 9. Conſider likewiſe that it maketh a man unfit to *pray*, 1 Tim. ii. 8. to hear the *Word*, 1 Pet. ii. 1. Jam. i. 19, or to perform any *worſhip* to *God*; and unfit to ſpeak, or hear reaſon, or to give or receive good counſel. *God* forbiddeth his children the *company of the froward?* Prov. xxii. 24. and ſaith, that ſuch a one doth *abound in tranſgreſſion*; Prov. xxix. 20. and that there is *more hope of a*

fool

fool than of him, Prov. xxix. 20. Wherefore he muſt needs be expoſed to all the juſt *judgments* of God, Prov. xix. 19. temporal and eternal. For which cauſe, fix in your mind ſuch an abhorrence of this vice, that you may beware and ſhun it with all caution.

Secondly, Obſerve watchfully when anger *beginneth* to kindle and ſtir in you, and before it flame and break forth into ſpeech or behaviour, *ſet your reaſon at work*, to prevent or reſtrain it. Nay, *ſet faith at work*, having in readineſs, upon your mind, ſuch pertinent Scriptures as theſe: *Be angry, but ſin not*, Ephe. iv. 26. And, *anger reſteth in the boſom of fools*, Eccl. 9. Shall I then ſin againſt God? ſhall I thus play the fool?

1ſt. Rules to know when anger is ſinful.

Then you *ſin* in your anger, *firſt*, when it is *without cauſe*, as, when neither God is diſhonoured, nor your neighbour or yourſelf indeed injured; when it is for *trifles*, and only becauſe you are croſſed in your will and deſire, and the like: but chiefly when you are *angry* with any for *well doing*, 1 Kings xxii. 24, 26. *Secondly*, though you have cauſe, yet if it *extinguiſh your love* to the perſon with whom you are angry; ſo that you neglect the common and needful offices thereof. *Thirdly*, when it exceedeth *due meaſure*, as when it is over much, and over long. *Fourthly*, it is ſinful when it bringeth forth *evil*, and *unſeemly effects*, ſuch as neglect, or ill performance

formance of duty to GOD, or man; alſo when it breaketh out into loud, clamorous, or reviling ſpeeches, or into churliſh, ſullen, or indecent behaviour, or when it is attended with any injurious act.

Thirdly, If you cannot keep anger from riſing within you, yet be ſure that you *bind your tongue and hand to good behaviour.* Make a *Covenant* with them, and charge them not to ſhew it, nor partake with it any farther than conſiderate reaſon, and good conſcience ſhall adviſe you. Set a *Law* to yourſelf, Pſal. xxxix. 1. Pſal. cxli. 3. that you will not chide, nor ſtrike while you are in the heat of anger. If there be cauſe of either, defer it until you have more government over yourſelf. "If you ſay that if you do them "not in your heat, you ſhall not do them at "all." I anſwer, that in ſaying ſo, you diſcover a great deal of *folly* and *weakneſs.* I am ſure you never do them well in paſſion. And *conſcience* of duty ſhould lead you to chiding, and correcting, when there is cauſe, not *paſſion:* for, in it, you ſerve and revenge yourſelf upon the party, but not GOD.

Fourthly, Both before and when you are angry. *See* GOD by the eye of your faith as preſent with you in hearing and looking upon you. This will make you peaceable, and quiet, Pſal. xi. 4, 5. cauſing you not only to hold your *hands* and *tongue*, as you find by experience you uſe to do, when ſome reverend friend is preſent; but

but this will calm and abate the inward heat and paſſion of your mind.

Fifthly, If you feel your corruption and weakneſs to be ſuch, and the provocation to anger ſo great, that you fear you *cannot contain* yourſelf, then if it be poſſible, *avoid all occaſions* of anger, and remove yourſelf, in a peaceable and quiet manner, from the perſon, object, or occaſion thereof. And at all times *ſhun the company of an angry man*, Prov. xxii. 24, 25. as much as your calling will give you leave, *leaſt you learn his ways.*

Sixthly, Howſoever it may happen that anger kindles in you, and breaketh out; be ſure that you ſubdue it before it grow into *hatred* of him with whom you are angry. For this *cauſe, let not the Sun go down upon your wrath*, Eph. iv. 26. you know not what *hatred* it may grow into before morning. And the beſt means which I know to ſubdue it is, if you find your heart to riſe againſt any, *pray heartily to God for him in particular, for his good*, Mat. v. 44. this you are commanded. And be ſo far from ſeeking revenge, that you force yourſelf to be *loving* and *kind*, ſhewing all good offices of love with wiſdom, as you ſhall have occaſion; overcoming evil with good, Rom. xii. 17, 20, 21. *Pray* alſo to *God* for *yourſelf*, that he would pleaſe to ſubdue this paſſion in you. This act of *love* to him with whom you are *angry*, performed before GOD, in whoſe ſight you dare not diſſemble, will excellently quench *wrath*, and prevent

hatred

hatred againſt him, and will give proof between GOD and your Conſcience that you *love* him.

If, pleading for yourſelf, you ſhall ſay, it is my natural *conſtitution* to be cholerick, and fleſh and blood will have their courſe. Know, this is to *nouriſh* your paſſion. Know alſo, it is a *wicked* and *hateful* conſtitution of body, which came in with the *fall*. And *fleſh and blood ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. xv. 50. Say not, I am ſo croſſed and provoked, never *any* the like. For *Chriſt* was more injured and more provoked than you, yet was never in a paſſion, 1 Pet. ii. 23. Heb. xii. 2, 3. And *you* provoke GOD a thouſand times *more* every day, yet he is patient with you. Say not, it is ſuch an head-ſtrong paſſion, that it is *impoſſible* to bridle and ſubdue it. For, I can aſſure you, that by uſing means, theſe preſcribed, if you alſo do often, and much abaſe yourſelf before GOD for your paſſion and folly, and daily repent thereof, and watch over yourſelf, you may of moſt haſty and paſſionate, become moſt *meek* and *patient* before you die. I have ſeen it in old men (whoſe age in itſelf giveth advantage to peviſhneſs and frowardneſs) who were exceeding paſſionate in their *youth*, yet through the grace of GOD, by conſtant conflict againſt this vice, have attained to an admirable degree of *meekneſs*.

2d. The cure of *worldly grief*.

Next, as carnal anger, ſo *worldly grief* muſt be avoided in all ſorts of croſſes. For, by it you repine againſt GOD, fret againſt men, and make yourſelf

yourſelf unfit for natural, civil, and ſpiritual duties, 1 Kings xxi. 4. and if it be continued, *it worketh death*, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

The beſt remedy againſt *worldly* ſorrow for any affliction, is to turn it into *godly* ſorrow for ſin, which is the cauſe of all our troubles. This will work *repentance to ſalvation, never to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. and will drive you to Chriſt, in whom if you believe, you will have joy and comfort; even ſuch *joy unſpeakable* as will diſpel and dry up both this, and all other *griefs* whatſoever, 1 Pet. i. 6, 8. For *godly ſorrow* doth always, in due time, end in *ſpiritual joy*.

(3.) The nature of Chriſtian patience.

In the third place I proceed to ſhew the *nature* of Chriſtian patience. By *Patience*, I do not mean a *Stoical inſenſibleneſs*, or dull ſtupidity, like that of *Iſſachar*, Gen. xlix. 14, 15. Nor yet a *counterfeit patience*, like *Eſau's*, Gen. xxvii. 41, 42. and *Abſalom's*, 2 Sam. xiii. 13, 22. Nor a *mere civil or moral patience*, which wiſe *Heathens*, to free themſelves from vexation, and for vain glory, and other ends, attained unto. Nor yet a *profane patience*, Rev. ii. 2. of men inſenſible of GOD's diſhonour or afflicting hand. Nor a *patience perforce*, when the ſufferer is merely *paſſive*, becauſe he cannot relieve himſelf; but a *Chriſtian holy patience*, wherein you muſt be *ſenſible* of GOD's hand, and when you cannot but feel an unwillingneſs in nature to bear it; yet, for *conſcience* towards GOD, you do ſubmit to his will,

will, and that voluntarily, with an *active patience*, cauſing yourſelf to be willing to bear it ſo long as GOD ſhall pleaſe; after the example of *Chriſt*, Mat. xxvi. 39, 42. *Not my will, but thine be done.* The excellency of *Chriſt's ſufferings*, was not in that he ſuffered, but in that he was *obedient in his ſuffering*. He was *obedient to the death*, Phil. ii. 8. So likewiſe no man's ſuffering is acceptable, if he be not *active* and *obedient* in ſuffering.

This Patience is a grace of the Spirit of God, wrought in the heart and will of man, through believing, and applying the Commandments, and Promiſes of God to himſelf; whereby, for conſcience ſake towards God, 1 Pet. ii. 19. *he doth ſubmit his will to God's will; quietly bearing, without bitterneſs and vexation, all the labours, changes, and evil occurrences which befall him in the whole courſe of his life, whether from God immediately, or from man; as alſo waiting patiently for all ſuch good things as God hath promiſed, but yet are delayed and unfulfilled.*

(4.) Motives to Chriſtian patience under adverſities.

To induce you to get, and to ſhew forth this holy *Patience*, know that *you have great need of it*, Heb. x. 36. and that in theſe reſpects:

1. You are *but half a Chriſtian*, you are imperfect, and want a principal grace in the Chriſtian life, *if you want patience:* thus St. *James* argueth, implying that he that will be *entire*, James i. 4. *and want nothing* to make him a Chriſtian,

Chriſtian, muſt have *patience*. This *paſſive obedience* is greater than *active*; it is more excellent, and more difficult *to obey in ſuffering*, than *to obey in doing*.

2. *You cannot have a ſure poſſeſſion of your ſoul without patience*; in your patience *poſſeſs ye your ſouls*, ſaith our *Savior*, Luke xxi. 19. A man without patience, is not his own man: he hath not power *nor rule over his own ſpirit*, Prov. xxv. 28. nor yet of his own body. The tongue, hands, and feet of an impatient man will not be held in by reaſon. But he that is patient, enjoyeth himſelf, and hath *rule over his ſpirit*, Prov. xvi. 32. no affliction can put him out of *poſſeſſion* of himſelf.

Thirdly, There are ſo many oppoſitions and hindrances in your Chriſtian race and warfare, that without patience to ſuffer, and to *wait*, Rom. viii. 25. you cannot poſſibly *bring forth good fruit to God*, nor hold out your profeſſion of Chriſtianity to the end; but will decline, and give over, before you have enjoyed the *promiſe*, Heb. x. 36. Therefore you are bid to *run with patience the race which is ſet before you*, Heb. xii. 1. And the good ground is ſaid to *bring forth fruit with patience*, Luke viii. 15. And the faithful are ſaid *through Faith and Patience to inherit the Promiſes*, Heb. vi. 12.

Fourthly, *Patience* worketh *experience*, Rom. v. 5. without which no man can be an eſtabliſhed Chriſtian; this experience being of the higheſt uſe to confirm the ſoul of a *Chriſtian* in

the

the greateſt difficulties. This be ſaid of the *neceſſity*, together with the *benefit* of patience, that you may love it, and may deſire to have, and ſhew it.

(5.) Means to gain Chriſtian patience under afflictions.

By what *means* you may attain it, followeth:

Firſt, Spend thoſe paſſions on your *luſts* which war in your members, (which are exerciſed on other objects,) fall out with them, and *mortify them*, for nothing maketh a man impatient, ſo much as his *luſts* do, both becauſe they will never be *ſatisfied*, and it is death to a man to be *croſſed* in them; and becauſe the fulneſs of luſts cauſeth a *guilty conſcience*, whence followeth impatience and troubleſome vexation upon every occaſion, like the raging Sea, which with every wind doth ſoam, and rage, and *caſt up nothing but mire and dirt*, Iſa. lvii. 20. And as St. *James* ſaith, *whence are wars and fightings*, James iv. 1. (So I ſay of all other fruits of impatiency) but from *your luſts that war in your members?* Take away the *cauſes* of impatiency, then you have made a good advance towards gaining Chriſtian patience.

Secondly, Lay a good foundation of patience, by being *humble* and *low in your own eyes*, through an apprehenſion that you are leſs than the leaſt of GOD's mercies, and that your *greateſt puniſhments are leſs than your iniquities have deſerved*, Ezra ix. 13. As Chriſtians abound in *humility*, ſo will they abound in *patience*, witneſs the examples

examples of *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Job*, *David*, and others.

Thirdly, Labour to gain and improve the Chriſtian graces of *faith*, *hope*, and *love:* all and either of theſe calm the heart, and keep it ſteady in adverſity. For beſides that, they quiet the heart in the aſſurance of GOD's love in Chriſt: *For being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, rejoice in hope*, Rom. v. 1, 3, 4. whence proceeds joy and *patience* in tribulation. And who can be *impatient* with him *whom he loveth with all his heart and ſtrength?* Theſe graces alſo furniſh the Chriſtian with an ability of *ſpiritual reaſoning* and *diſputing* with a diſquieted ſoul, whereby it may be happily *compoſed*, and brought to poſſeſs itſelf in *patience* under any adverſity.

Wherefore the fourth means of patience is, to do as *David* did, whenſoever you find your heart begin to fret, and be impatient, you muſt (before paſſion or grief hath got the maſtery over you) *aſk your ſoul what is the matter, and why it is ſo diſquieted within you*, Pſal. xlii. 11. This do ſeriouſly, and your heart will quickly repreſent to you, ſuch and ſuch afflictions, aggravated by many circumſtances of diſtreſs. All which you muſt anſwer by the ſpiritual reaſoning of your *faith*, founded on the *word of God*, whereby you may quiet your heart, and put your griefs to ſilence.

Whatſoever the affliction be that may trouble you; you may be furniſhed with *reaſons* why you ſhould be *patient*, either (1.) from GOD that

that ſent it: (2.) from *yourſelf* on whom it lyeth: (3.) from the nature *and uſe of the affliction itſelf:* (4.) by conſidering the *evils of impatience:* (5.) by *comparing the bleſſings you have*, and are aſſured that you ſhall have, *with the croſſes you have*, eſpecially if patiently endured. From all theſe conſiderations you will ſee reaſon, why your heart ſhould be *quiet* under the greateſt afflictions.

Firſt, conſider well, that whatſoever the trouble and croſs be, and whoſoever be the inſtrument of it, either in the ſenſe of evil, or in the want of good promiſed, it comes from *God your Father*, (1.) who doth all things according to the wiſdom and counſel of his own will; (2.) who doth afflict with moſt tender affection; (3.) who correcteth and afflicteth in meaſure; (4.) who hath always holy purpoſes and ends in all afflictions, directing them for your good.

Firſt, conſider that it was God that did it. *There is no evil* (that is of puniſhment) *in a City, which the Lord hath not done*, ſaith *Amos*, Amos iii. 6. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, ſaith *Eli*, 1 Sam. iii. 18. *I opened not my mouth*, ſaith *David, becauſe thou (Lord) didſt it*, Pſal. xxxix. 9. *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord*, ſaith *Job*, Job i. 21. Hoſ. vi. 1. 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7.

2. All this God doth to his children with *a fatherly affection*, in much love and pity, Heb. xii. 5, 6. He hath *your ſoul ſtill in remembrance*,

while you are in adverſity, Pſal. xxxi. 7. *Yea, he beareth ſome part* of the burden with you: for (ſpeaking after the manner of man) he ſaith, that *in all the afflictions* of his children *he is afflicted*, Iſa. lxiii. 9. *He delighteth not in afflicting the children of men*, Lam. iii. 33. much leſs his own children.

If you aſk, why then doth he afflict, or why doth he not eaſe you ſpeedily? I aſk you, why a tender-hearted father, being a *Chirurgeon*, who is grieved and troubled at the pain and anguiſh, which he himſelf cauſeth his child to feel by neceſſary operation, doth notwithſtanding apply the burning irons, and ſuffer thoſe plaiſters to afflict him for a long time? You will ſay, ſure the wound or malady of the child *required* it, that elſe it could not be cured. This is the caſe betwixt GOD and you: GOD's *heart* is tender, and yearneth towards you, when his *hand* is upon you: therefore bear it *patiently*.

3. *God afflicteth you in meaſure*, Iſa. xxvii. 8. fitting your affliction for *kind*, *time*, and *weight*, according to the ſtrength of grace which he hath already given you, or which certainly he will beſtow upon you. He doth *never lay more upon you, than what you ſhall be able to bear*, 1 Cor. x. 13. and will always with the croſs and temptation, make a way to eſcape. The huſbandman will not always be *plowing*, Iſa. xxviii. 24, 25. and harrowing of his ground, but only giveth it ſo much as it hath need of, or as the nature or ſituation of the ſoil requireth. So likewiſe he

threſheth

threſheth his divers ſorts of grain, with *divers inſtruments*, according as the grain can endure them: *the fitches are not threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument, neither is the cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin: bread-corn is bruiſed, becauſe he will not ever be threſhing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruiſe it with his horſemen*, Iſa. xxviii. 26, 27, 28. If the huſbandman do all this by the *diſcretion wherewith God hath inſtructed him*; can you think that *God, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working*, Iſa. xxviii. 29. will plow, and harrow any of his ground, or threſh any of his corn, above that which *is fit*, and more than his ground and corn *can bear*? Should not his ground and corn therefore be *patient* at ſuch tillage, and at ſuch threſhing?

4. *God's end in afflicting, is always his own glory in your good*; as, to humble you, and to bring you to a ſight of your ſin, to break up the fallow ground of your heart, *that you may ſow in righteouſneſs*, and *reap in mercy*, Hoſ. x. 12. to harrow you, that the ſeed of grace may take root in you. All GOD's afflictions are either to remove impediments of grace: *By this*, (ſaith *Iſaiah*,) *ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin*, Iſa. xxvii. 9. All the plowing is but to kill weeds, and to fit the ground for ſeed; all the threſhing and winnowing, is but to ſever the chaff from the corn; and all the grinding, and boulting by afflictions, is but to ſever the bran from the flour,

that *God's people* may be a *pure offering*, *acceptable to him*, Iſa. lxvi. 20.) Or elſe he afflicts, that his children might have experience of his love and power in *preſerving* and *delivering* them, or that they might have the *exerciſe*, *proof*, and *increaſe* of faith, *hope*, Rom. v. 4. love, and other principal graces, which ſerve for the beautifying and perfecting of a Chriſtian. *God doth judge his children here*, 1 Cor. xi. 32. that they may repent, and be reformed, *that they may not be condemned with the world. God's* end in chaſtening you, will be found to be always for your good, that you ſhall be able to ſay, *It was good for me to be afflicted*, Pſal. cxix. 67, 71. For it is *that you may be partaker of his holineſs*, Heb. xii. 10, 11. and accordingly of his glory and happineſs. Bear therefore all afflictions *patiently*, for they are for your *good.*

If this be your croſs and trouble, that you *want* many of the graces and good gifts of God which he hath promiſed: Know alſo that this *defering* to give graces and comforts, is of God, not out of neglect or forgetfulneſs of you; but of *wiſe* and *good purpoſes* towards you. As to inflame your *deſires* more and more after them; and, that you ſhould *ſeek* them in a better manner. It is likewiſe to *try* your faith, and hope, whether you will do him that honour, as to wait and reſt upon his bare word. When you are fit for them, you ſhall have them. You muſt therefore charge your heart yet to wait *patiently* for them, conſidering the faithfulneſs and

power

power of GOD that promiſed: and that *all the promiſes of God are Yea and Amen in Chriſt*, 2 Cor. i. 20. He is wiſe, true, and able to fulfill them in the due time, and in the beſt manner: for *faithful is he that hath promiſed, and will fulfill it:* and *yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. x. 23, 37.

Secondly, when the Soul beginneth to be *diſquieted*, *conſider yourſelf* how *unworthy* you are of any bleſſing, how worthy you are of all GOD's curſes, yea, of eternal damnation in Hell; and that juſtly, becauſe of the ſins of your nature, of your heart, and of your life. When you do thus, your heart will be *quiet* and *contented*, you will ſay with the Church (whatſoever your trouble be,) *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, for I have ſinned againſt him*, Mic. vii. 9. He that acknowledgeth that he hath deſerved to be *hanged, drawn, and quartered*, for an offence againſt the *King*, if the *King* will be ſo merciful that he ſhall eſcape only with a *ſevere whiping*, to remember him of his diſloyalty, (though he ſmart terribly with thoſe laſhes,) yet in his mind he can bear them *patiently*, and *ſubmiſſively*. If you think thus, I deſerve *more* puniſhment in this kind, nay, in any other more grievous than this, my puniſhment is *leſs than mine iniquities deſerve*, Ezra ix. 13. for I might have been long ſince deſpairing in torments, and paſt all means and hope of Salvation, but I *live*, and have time, and means to make a good uſe of my afflictions; theſe thoughts will cauſe you to ſay, why do I,

who am *a living man complain for the puniſhment of my ſin*, Lam. iii. 39. which is ſo much lighter than my deſert. And ſay with the Church in all your diſtreſſes, *it is God's mercy it is not worſe. It is God's mercy I am not utterly conſumed*, Lam. iii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Thirdly, When your ſoul beginneth to be *impatient* under afflictions, whether in ſoul, body, or eſtate; conſider the *nature* and *uſe* of them. To the eye of ſenſe they are evil, Heb. xii. 11. as poiſon, hurtful and dangerous; but to the eye of faith, they are good and uſeful, as *phyſick*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. moſt healthful to the ſoul, and ſaving, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. *God the ſkilful Phyſician* hath quite altered the nature of croſſes to his children; he that bringeth light out of darkneſs, ſo orders afflictions, that they become good *antidotes and preſervatives againſt ſin*, and good *purgatives of ſin*, Iſa. xxvii. 9. The ſting, and curſe of the croſs, which remaineth to the *wicked*, is by Chriſt's patient ſuffering, and GOD's mercy, taken quite away out of the afflictions of believers. *Afflictions* to the godly, are not properly *puniſhments* ſerving to pacify GOD's wrath for ſin; but are only *chaſtiſements* to remove ſin, and are *exerciſes of graces*, and *means* of holineſs. For they ſerve either to *prevent evil*, or to *reform* it; either to *prepare* way for grace, to *quicken* and *increaſe* grace, or to *diſcover* and give proof of it. *God is a wiſe and ſkilfull refiner*, he knows how to purge his gold, by caſting it into the *fire* of affliction, 1 Pet. i. 7.

which

which fire is not the ſame to the *droſs*, which it is to the *gold*; it conſumes the *droſs*, but refineth the gold, that it may be fit to be made a *veſſel of Honour*. Fire ſerveth to try *gold*, as well as to *purge* it; for pure gold, though it remain in the fire many days, the fire cannot waſte it; when it is once pure, it will hold its weight ſtill for all the burning. Hence it is that the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes:* Pſal. cxix. 67, 71. and the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *All things work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. viii. 28. He is a froward and fooliſh perſon, who being ſick of a deadly diſeaſe, doth not *patiently* and *chearfully* bear the gripings, and ſickneſs of ſtomach, when he knoweth this ſickneſs, cauſed by bitter phyſick, is for his *health*.

You will ſay, if you could find that *your afflictions* did you *any good*, you ſhould not only be patient, but chearful under them.

I anſwer; Whatſoever you feel, *faith* in GOD's Word will tell you, that they both now do you good, and hereafter you ſhall feel the benefit of it. The *benefit of Phyſic* is not always felt *the day you take it*, but chiefly when the *Phyſic hath done working*. The chief end why GOD trieth and purgeth you by afflictions, is, that he may *humble you, and prove you, to do you good at your latter end*, Deut. viii. 15, 16. You ſhould therefore be patient in the mean time.

Fourthly, If yet your heart remains diſquieted, becauſe of your affliction; *conſider with your-*

ſelf, what harm impatience will do you, compared with the good that will follow a patient enduring of it. For, beſides that it depriveth you of your right underſtanding, and maketh you to forget yourſelf, as I have ſaid, even to forget your duty both to *God*, and *Man*; it is the readieſt means to *double*, and *lengthen* the affliction, not to abate it, and take it off. That parent which intended to give a child but light correction, if he be impatient, and rebellious under it, is hereby more incenſed, and doth puniſh him *more ſeverely.* But if in any affliction you do *patiently ſubmit yourſelf under GOD's mighty hand*, 1 Pet. v. 6. (beſides the eaſe and quiet it giveth to the ſoul, and experience and hope which it produceth in you,) it is the readieſt means of *ſeaſonable deliverance* out of it; for then *GOD will exalt you in due time.* GOD is *wiſe*, and *too ſtrong* to be overcome by any means, but by *fervent prayer*, and *humble ſubmiſſion* to his will, Hoſ. xii. 4.

Fifthly, If yet your mind be diſquieted within you at any croſſes; that you may quiet your ſoul, *you muſt not* (as moſt do,) *only conſider the weight and number of your croſſes*, together with their ſeveral aggravations; *but withall ſeriouſly think upon the manifold mercies and favours of God*, both in the evils you have eſcaped, and in the benefits which you have received, and do now enjoy, and which (through Chriſt) you have cauſe to hope to receive hereafter. But amongſt all his *mercies*, forget not this one which you have

have already, *GOD hath given Chriſt unto you*, whereby he himſelf is yours, as your all-ſufficient portion. Now, if you have *Chriſt*, you have with him, *all things alſo which are worth the having*, Rom. viii. 32.

When you have thus weighed impartially *bleſſings* and *mercies* againſt croſſes, you will tell me, that for one croſs, you have an hundred bleſſings, yea, *a bleſſing in your croſſes*, Pſal. cxix. 71. and you will ſay, that this *one mercy of being in Chriſt*, alone weigheth up *all croſſes*, and maketh them as light as nothing; giving you ſo much matter of *joy* and *thankfulneſs*, even in the midſt of affliction, that you can neither have cauſe, nor time to be *impatient*, or to *repine* at any *affliction*, but to *rejoice* even in your *tribulations*, Rom. v. 1, 2, 3.

And as for the time to come, when you think upon all your croſſes and ſufferings of this preſent time, yet *reckon, that they are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in you*, Rom. viii. 18. For they are but *ſhort* for time, and *light* for weight, being compared with the *everlaſting weight of glory* which they will work for to you, if you *endure them patiently*. I will ſay nothing of the ſhortneſs and lightneſs of your afflictions, in compariſon of the far more *intolerable* and *eternal weight* of torments of *Hell* which you eſcape: and in comparing afflictions with glory; I will point out to you only the *Apoſtles gradation*, you ſhall have, for *affliction*, *glory*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. for *light* affliction, *weight*

of *glory*; for *ſhort* affliction, an *eternal* glory; for *common* and ordinary affliction, *excellent* glory: And although it might be thought that he had ſaid enough, yet he addeth degrees of compariſon; goeth beyond all degrees, calling it *more excellent*, *far more excellent:* for thus he ſaith, *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more excellent and eternal weight of glory.* Indeed you muſt *not look at the things which are ſeen* with the eye of ſenſe, 2 Cor. iv. 18. but at *things which are not ſeen* (which are *ſpiritual* and *eternal*) ſeen only by the eye of faith.

You will ſay, *If you did bear afflictions for Chriſt*, then you could rejoice in hope; but you oft-times *ſuffer afflictions juſtly for your ſin.*

I anſwer, Though this place principally points ſuffering *for Chriſt's cauſe*, yet it is all one, in your caſe, if you bear afflictions patiently *for his ſake.* A man may ſuffer afflictions for *Chriſt* two ways; Firſt, When he ſuffereth for his *Religion and for his cauſe.* Secondly, When a man ſuffereth any thing which GOD layeth upon him quietly for *Chriſt's will and commandment ſake.* This latter is more general than the former, and the former muſt be comprehended in this latter; elſe the former ſuffering for CHRIST's cauſe, if it be not in *love* and obedience, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. and for Chriſt's ſake, out of Conſcience to fulfill his will, is nothing: whereas he that endureth patiently GOD's juſt puniſhment for ſin for *Chriſt's* ſake, endeavouring to ſubmit his will to the will of Chriſt; this man *ſuffers*, that is, patiently

patiently endureth affliction *for* CHRIST, though he never *ſuffer for profeſſion of Chriſt:* and, if ſuch a one were put to it, he would readily ſuffer for Chriſt's *cauſe*. And ſuch afflictions as theſe, thus patiently endured, work alſo this *excellent weight of glory*, as well as the other.

By theſe and the like reaſonings of faith, you may poſſeſs your ſoul in patience, as *David* and others have done, Pſal. xlii. Pſal. xliii. *by caſting anchor on God*, and on his Word, fixing their ſtay and hope in Him. Let the iſſue of your reaſoning be this, *I will wait on God, and yet*, for all the cauſes of diſtreſs, *praiſe him who is the health of my countenance, and my God.* Thus *David* quieted his heart, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. when he heard tydings that his City *Ziglag was burnt*, and that his wives and all that he had, together with the wives and children of all his ſoldiers, were carried captive; and when he ſaw that his ſoldiers began to mutiny, and heard them ſpeak of ſtoning him, *he incouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.* And good *Jehoſaphat*, in his deſperate condition, caſt anchor here, ſaying, *O our God, we know not what to do, but our eyes are on thee*, 2 Chro. xx. 12. Thus by the exerciſe of your hope in GOD, the heart may be wrought unto much *patience* and *quietneſs* in all diſtreſſes.

A fifth means of patience is: *obſerve the patience of others*, as of the *Prophets* and faithful ſervants of GOD, who are recorded in *Scripture*, and left as *examples of ſuffering affliction, and of patience. We count them happy that endure*, ſaith

St.

St. *James*, *you have heard of the patience of* Job, *and have ſeen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*, Jam. v. 10, 11. But eſpecially repreſent to your thoughts *the patience of your Head and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, whom you *pierced* by your ſins, who *as a Lamb, dumb before the ſhearer, opened not his mouth*, Iſa. liii. 7. Now, if you would conſider him who is the Author and finiſher of your faith; who *indured ſuch contradiction of ſinners*, Heb. xii. 1, 2, 3, &c. and ſuch intolerable anguiſh of ſoul, when he wreſtled with his Father's wrath; then you would not be wearied nor faint in your minds, when you are under any affliction. If with Chriſt you *ſet the joy before you, you will be able to endure the croſs, and deſpiſe the ſhame of* all perſecution for well doing, and ſo *run that race that is ſet before you with patience*, that you ſhall in the end ſit down with *Chriſt* at the right hand of the Throne of God, Heb. xii. 2. Rev. iii. 21.

Sixthly, and laſtly, *Pray much for patience*, waiting patiently for it, Jam. i. 4, 5. and without doubt, the *God of patience* and conſolation, who hath commanded it, who ſeeth that you have need of it, who hath promiſed to give you all your petitions which you make according to his will, *will ſurely give you patience.*

(6.) Of bearing afflictions thankfully and fruitfully.

To bear adverſity and afflictions well, it is not enough that you bear them *patiently*, becauſe you deſerve them, and becauſe they come from *God*;

God; but you muſt bear them *thankfully*, Lam. iii. 22, 23. Job i. 21. *chearfully*, and *comfortably*, Rom. v. 3. becauſe they are (as you have heard) for your *good*, Pſal. cxix. 71. Lam. iii. 27. We do not only patiently endure the hand of the *Chirurgion*, and the preſcriptions of the *Phyſician*, but we thank them, pay them, and are glad of their recipes, though they put us to pain. *Count it exceeding joy*, ſaith St. *James*, *when you fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience, &c.* Jam. i. 2, 3.

Laſt of all, unto patience and thankfulneſs, you muſt add *fruitfulneſs*, and *growth of grace*, Pſal. cxix. 67, 71. this ſhould be the fruit of all croſſes and afflictions, that with *David* you may be *better* for them, and that you may with *Job*, *come out of them as gold* refined and purged from droſs, Job xxiii. 10. Therefore GOD doth chaſten you as he did *Jacob*: *This is all the fruit, to take away your ſin*, Iſa. xxvii. 9. and that you ſhould be *partaker of his holineſs*, Heb. xii. 10. Be better therefore for croſſes, then GOD hath his end; when after his plowing, harrowing, and threſhing of you, he ſhall reap the harveſt of well *doing*; which he reapeth not ſo much for himſelf, as for you; for *the ground that bringeth forth fruit meet for him that dreſſeth it, receiveth bleſſing from God*, Heb. vi. 7. "All good "works are treaſured up in heaven for the doers "thereof."

When

When you have learned this leſſon alſo, *How to be abaſed and to ſuffer need*, Phil. iv. 11, 12. as well as *how to be full and to abound*, with all the fore-mentioned directions, how at all times, and in all things to *walk with* GOD, you will approve yourſelf to be a good proficient in the ſchool of Chriſt, one that hath walked to good purpoſe before GOD; ſhewing, that you are neither *barren*, *nor unfruitful*, in the knowledge of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Thus much concerning the *outward frame* of your life and converſation, according to which you muſt walk with GOD. The *inward truth* and life of all this, which is, *doing all in uprightneſs*, remaineth to be ſpoken unto, and is as followeth.

CHAP. XI.

Of Uprightneſs.

THE ſum of this head is contained in this, that *in your whole walking with GOD, you muſt be upright.* Both theſe, to *walk* with GOD, and to be *upright*, are joined in this precept; *Walk with me, and be perfect or upright*, Gen. xvii. 1. He ſpeaketh not of an abſolute perfection of degrees, in the fulneſs of all graces, which is only aimed at in this life, towards which the Chriſtian by watchfulneſs and diligence may come nearer, and nearer; but is never

ver attained untill we come to *Heaven*, amongſt *the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect*, Heb. xii. 23. He ſpeaketh here of the perfection of parts, and of truth of grace in every part, expreſſing itſelf in *unfeignedneſs* of will and endeavour; which is *uprightneſs*.

§. I. *The Neceſſity of* Uprightneſs *in Religion.*

That you ſhould be ſincere and upright, read Joſhua xxiv. 14. 1. Cor. xxviii. 9. And the Apoſtle telleth you, that *ſince Chriſt Jeſus your Paſſover is ſlain, you muſt keep the feaſt* (which ſhadoweth forth the whole time of our life here) *with the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth*, 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. The examples of *Noah*, Gen. vi. 9. *Job*, Job i. 1. *Nathaniel*, John i. 47. with many others in the *Scriptures*, are therefore written, that of them you may learn to be *upright*. There is ſpecial *reaſon* why you ſhould be upright.

Firſt, *Your God* with whom you walk, is *perfect* and *upright*, Mat. v. 48. he is truth, *He loveth truth in the inward parts*, Pſal. li. 6. all his works are done in truth; and there was *no guile ever found to be either in the mouth, hand, or heart of your Head Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Pet. ii. 21, 22. Now, you ſhould pleaſe GOD, and be *like* your Father and Head CHRIST JESUS, following his ſteps.

Secondly, *it is to no purpoſe* to do that which is right in GOD's ſight, in reſpect of the matter of

of your actions, *if in the truth and diſpoſition of your ſoul you be not upright* therein. For the beſt action void of *uprightneſs*, is but like a well-proportioned body without life and ſubſtance. And that is counted as *not done at all to God*, Zach. vii. 5, 6. which is not done in uprightneſs. This exception is taken againſt *Amaziah*'s good actions. It is ſaid, *He did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord*, but he did it not in uprightneſs, *he did it not with a perfect heart*, 2 Chro. xxv. 2.

Thirdly, the beſt actions without uprightneſs, do not only *loſe their goodneſs*; but in GOD's account are eſteemed *abominable evils*. Such were the *Prayers and Sacrifices* of the hypocritical Jews, Iſa. i. 13, 14. Iſa. lxvi. 3. For GOD judgeth ſuch actions, and ſuch ſervices, to be meer *flattery, lying, and mocking him to his face*, Pſal. lxxviii. 34, 36, 37.

Now, becauſe there is none ſo ready to preſume that he is upright, as is the *hypocrite*, ſaying with *Ephraim*; *In all my labours they ſhall find no iniquity in me, that were ſin*, Hoſ. xii. 8. And, becauſe there are none ſo ready to doubt, whether they be *upright*, as are the tender-hearted and ſincere. So it was with *David*, when he prayed to have a *right ſpirit renewed in him*, Pſal. li. 10. It will be needful and uſeful that I ſhew you, what *uprightneſs* is, and by what infallible ſigns you may know whether you be *upright* or no.

§. II. *The*

§. II. *The Deſcription of Uprightneſs.*

CHRISTIAN uprightneſs (for of that I mean) *is a ſaving grace of the Holy Ghoſt, wrought in the heart of a man rightly informed in the knowledge of God in Chriſt, whereby his ſoul ſtandeth ſo intirely and ſincerely right towards God, that in the true diſpoſition, bent, and firm determination of his will, he would, in every faculty and power of ſoul and body, approve himſelf to be ſuch a one as God would have him to be, and would do what-ſoever God would have him to do, and all as God would have him, and that, for and unto God, and his Glory.*

The *Author* of this uprightneſs is *God's ſanctifying Spirit.*

The *common nature* of it, wherein it agreeth with other graces, is, it is *a ſaving grace*; it is *peculiar* to them that ſhall be ſaved: for only they are indued with it; but it is *common* to all, and every one, who is *effectually called.*

The *proper ſeat* of this grace is the *will.*

The *fountain* in man, from whence, through the ſpecial grace of the Holy Ghoſt, it ſprings, *is ſound knowledge of God and of his will,* concerning thoſe things which the *will* ſhould chuſe, and refuſe; and from *faith in Chriſt Jeſus,* thro' whom every believer doth, *of his fulneſs,* receive this grace to be upright. Hereby *Chriſtian uprightneſs* differeth from that uprightneſs, which may be in a meer natural, ſuperſtitious, and miſ-

miſ-believing man, for even ſuch may be unfeigned in their actions in their kind, both in actions civil and ſuperſtitious, doing that which they do, in their ignorance and blindneſs, without diſſimulation either with GOD, or man. This St. *Paul* did before his converſion, he did, *as he thought he ought to do*, Acts xxvi. 9.

The form, and proper nature of uprightneſs, is the *good inclination, diſpoſition, and firm intention of the will to a full conformity with God's will*, and that, not in *ſome* faculties and powers of man, or in *ſome* of his actions, but the Chriſtian would be *univerſally* ſincere in all his parts, and in all things; he would be, and do, as GOD would have him to be and do, making *God's will* revealed in his Word and Works, *to be his will*, and *God's* Glory to be his *End*.

This holy *uprightneſs* expreſſeth itſelf in theſe three things.

Firſt, it ſheweth itſelf in a *well grounded and unfeigned purpoſe and reſolution* to cleave to the Lord, and to make GOD's will to be his will, Acts xi. 23. Pſal. cxix. 57, 106. This is an Act of the *will* guided and concluded from ſound judgment.

The ſecond act is an *unfeigned deſire and longing of the heart to attain this good purpoſe and reſolution, willing or deſiring in all things to live honeſtly*, Heb. xiii. 18. and to live worthy the LORD in all well pleaſing; *longing* (with *David*) *after God's precepts*, Pſal. cxix. 40. This is an act of the affection of *deſire*, *a motion of the will*, drawing

drawing and exciting a man forward, giving him no reſt, untill he have obtained (at leaſt in ſome good meaſure) his ſaid purpoſe.

Thirdly, uprightneſs ſheweth itſelf in a *true endeavour and exerciſe* (according to the ſtrength and meaſure of grace received) to be, and to do according to the former reſolutions and deſires. Such was the *Apoſtle's endeavour to have always a conſcience void of offence towards God and towards men*, Acts xxiv. 16. This endeavour is an act of the whole man. All and every active power of ſoul and body, as there ſhall be uſe of them, are employed in *unfeigned endeavour*.

Now concerning *endeavour*, know, there are which think they endeavour *ſufficiently*, when they *do not*: others that they do not, when yet *they do*. The firſt, if they, to the *ſluggards* longing and wiſhing, do join an *outward* conformity to the means of grace, as to hearing the Word, praying now and then, and receiving the Sacraments; and if they do ſome things which may be done with *little* labour and difficulty; and if to theſe they add ſome ſlight eſſays to abſtain from ſin, and to do well, they think they *endeavour much*: whereas, if they do no more, all is to *little* purpoſe.

For, to *endeavour*, is to *exerciſe* the head with ſtudy how, Acts xxiv. 16. and the heart with will and deſire, and the hand and tongue, and the whole outward man to do their utmoſt, puting to their *whole* ſtrength, their *whole* ſkill, and their *whole* will to ſubdue ſin, and to be ſtrengthened

ened in grace, and built up more and more; in knowledge, faith and holineſs, removing or breaking thorough every *hindrance*, ſhunning all *occaſions* of evil, or whatſoever may *ſtrengthen* ſin, ſeeking after and embracing all *opportunities* and *means* to be ſtrengthned in the inward man, Phil. iii. 11, 14. If one means will not be ſufficient, if there be others to be uſed, they will find out and uſe *them* alſo; if they cannot attain their good purpoſes at once, they will try *again* and *again*. They who endeavour indeed, not only *ſeek* to obtain their ends, but they *ſtrive* in ſeeking. As hard *Students*, as good *Warriors*, and *Wreſtlers*, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27. and as thoſe who *run in a race* do, ſo *that they may obtain* that which they ſtudy, fight, wreſtle, and run for. It is not a bare wiſhing and woulding for a fit, or a cold and common ſeeking; but an earneſt *ſtriving to enter in at the ſtreight gate*, Luke xiv. 24. that giveth admittance into the *way of holineſs*, and into the *kingdom of heaven*. It is a ſtudying and exerciſing a man's ſelf as in a matter of life and death; and as a wiſe man would do for a kingdom, where there is poſſibility, and hope of obtaining it.

Others, who *indeed endeavour* to keep a good conſcience toward GOD and man, yet, becauſe they cannot bring into *act* always that which they labour for, or becauſe they ſee *over-ſights*, *neglects*, or ſome *weakneſs* in their endeavours, they think that they endeavour to *no purpoſe*. Whereas, if they do what they can, according

to

to the ſtrength of Grace received, or according to the condition or ſtate wherein they are, which is ſometimes better, ſometimes worſe; if they ſee their failings in their endeavours, and *bewail* them, and do aſk *pardon*, reſolving by GOD's grace to ſtrive to do *better*; this is true endeavour, this is that which GOD for *Chriſt ſake* doth accept of, Mark xiv. 8. For ſince *endeavour* is a part of our holineſs, you muſt not think that it will be *perfect* in this life; if it be *true*, you muſt thank *God*, for he will accept of that.

A man's *endeavour* may be as *true, and as much*, when yet he cannot *perform* what he endeavours to do, as it is at other times, when with the endeavour he hath alſo *ability to perform*. As you may ſee in natural endeavours. The ſame man being well in health, if he fall and break not his arms or legs, he doth *endeavour* to get up, and readily do it: but if he be weak, or if falling he breaketh his arms and legs; he alſo hath a will and deſire to riſe, and ſtriveth earneſtly to help himſelf, but cannot do it effectually, and in that caſe, he is fain to lye untill he ſee help coming: then he will call, and entreat help, and when one giveth him the hand, though he cannot riſe of himſelf, yet he will lift up himſelf, as well as he can: Doth not this man in his latter condition as truly *endeavour*, as he did in his former? So it is with a ſpiritual man in his ſpiritual endeavours. If he eſſay to do what he *can*, and call to GOD for

for his *help*, and when he hath it, is glad, and willing to *improve* it, this is the true endeavour, which, concurring with the two former acts, *purpoſe*, and *deſire*, giveth proof *of uprightneſs*.

There is a twofold uprightneſs; the one of the *heart and perſon*, the other of the *action*: I have deſcribed the uprightneſs of the *perſon*. Then an *action* is upright, when a man doth not diſſemble, but doth mean as he ſaith, intending as much as is pretended, whether it be in actions toward *God*, or *man*. The firſt is, when the *heart* of man agreeth with, and in the intention thereof, is according to the Will of God. The ſecond is, when the *outward act* agreeth with, and is according to the heart of him that doth it.

§. III. *Rules to Judge of Uprightneſs.*

THAT you may rightly judge whether you are *upright* or no; Firſt, take certain *rules* for direction, to rectify your judgment. Then obſerve the *marks* of uprightneſs.

Firſt, *uprightneſs* being part of *Sanctification*, *is not fully perfect in any man in this life*; but is mixt with ſome *hypocriſy*, conflicting one againſt the other. It hath its degrees, ſometimes more, ſometimes leſs; in ſome things more, in ſome things leſs, according as each part *prevaileth* in the oppoſition, and according as the Chriſtian *groweth* or *decayeth* in other principal and fundamental graces.

Secondly,

Secondly, *a man is not to be called an upright man, or an hypocrite, becauſe of ſome few actions wherein he may ſhew uprightneſs, or hypocriſy:* For an hypocrite may do ſome *upright actions*, in which he doth not diſſemble; though he cannot be ſaid to do them *in uprightneſs*, as *Jehu* deſtroyed the wicked houſe of *Ahab*, and the idolatrous Prieſts of *Baal* with all his heart, 2 Kings x. And the beſt man may do ſome hypocritical and guilefull actions, as (in the matter of *Uriah*) *David* did, 1 Kings xv. 5. It is not the *having* of hypocriſy that denominateth an hypocrite, but the *reigning* of it, which is, when it is not ſeen, confeſſed, bewailed, and oppoſed.

A man ſhould judge of his uprightneſs, rather by his *will*, *bent*, and *inclination* of his ſoul, and good deſires, and true endeavours to well doing in the *whole* courſe of his life, than by this or that *particular* act, or by his power to do. *David* was thus eſteemed *a man according to GOD's own heart*, no otherwiſe; rather by the goodneſs of the *general courſe* of his life, &c. than by particular actions: for in *many* things he offended GOD, and polluted his ſoul, and blemiſhed his reputation.

Thirdly, Although *uprightneſs* is to be judged by the inward Frame of the Heart towards GOD, yet *whereſoever uprightneſs is, it will ſhew itſelf in mens actions in the courſe of their lives*, James ii. 18. only obſerve this, that in judging your actions, you muſt not judge them ſo much by the *greatneſs of the quantity*, as by the *ſoundneſs*,

ſoundneſs, and goodneſs of the quality. If it be good *in truth*, according to the meaſure of grace received, GOD accepteth it in Chriſt. She hath done *what ſhe could*, ſaith our Saviour, 2 Cor. viii. 12. Mark xiv. 8. A little *ſound* and *true* fruit, though weak in compariſon, is far better than many fair bloſſoms, yea, than plenty of grapes, if they be *wild* and *ſouer*.

§. IV. *Particular Marks of Uprightneſs.*

THAT you may conceive more diſtinctly, and better remember the *ſigns of Uprightneſs*, I reduce them to theſe heads. They are taken, 1. From *univerſality* of reſpect to *all* GOD's will. 2. From a *ſpecial* reſpect to ſuch things as GOD requireth *ſpecially*. 3. From a will and deſire to pleaſe GOD in one *place as well as another*; in ſecret as well as openly. 4. From a *conſtancy* of will to pleaſe GOD at *one time, as well as another*. 5. From the true *cauſes from whence good actions flow*. 6. From the *effects that follow well doing*. 7. From the *effects that follow evil doing*. 8. From the *conflict* which ſhall be found between *uprightneſs* and *hypocriſy*.

Firſt, the *upright man is univerſal in his reſpect to the whole Will of God*, Pſal. cxix. 6.

1. In an unfeigned deſire and endeavour to *know* what manner of man he ought to be, and what he ought to do, Pſal. cxix. 33, 34. *He would know and believe any one part of God's will, ſo far as it may concern himſelf, as well as another*;

Threats,

Threats, as well as Promiſes, Commandments as well as either; and that not ſome, but *all* the Threats, *all* the Promiſes, and *all* the Commandments. *Coming to the light* readily, *that his deeds may be made manifeſt*, John iii. 21.

He is willing to *know and believe*, what he ſhould *do*, as well as what he ſhould *have and hope for*. But the *hypocrite does not ſo*, he winketh with his eyes, and is *willingly ignorant* of that ſin which he would *not leave*, Mat. xiii. 15. 2 Pet. iii. 5. and of that duty which he would *not do*, and of that judgment which he would *not feel*. He is willing to know the *Promiſes* of the Goſpel, but willingly ignorant of the *Precepts* of the Goſpel, and of the conditions annexed to the promiſes.

2. *His univerſal Reſpect to God's Will*, is not only to know, *but to do*, and to ſubmit unto it in all things, willing to leave and ſhun every ſin; willing to do every thing which he knoweth to be his duty; willing to bear patiently, thankfully, and fruitfully, every correction wherewith the Lord doth exerciſe him. He diſliketh ſin in all. He loveth grace and goodneſs in all. He would keep a good conſcience in *all* acts of Religion towards GOD, Acts xxiv. 16. and in *all* acts of righteouſneſs and ſobriety towards and amongſt men. He would forbear not only thoſe ſins to which his nature is *not ſo much* inclined, or to which his condition of life affordeth not *ſo many* temptations: but thoſe to which his nature and condition of life doth *moſt carry him*, he will

croſs himſelf in his deareſt luſt, eſpecially his formerly beloved ſins; his *own ſin*, as *David* calleth it, Pſal. xviii. 23. Neither doth he endeavour to abſtain from thoſe vices which may bring loſs, and are out of credit; which human laws puniſh, and all men cry out againſt: but ſuch as, through the iniquity of the times, are in countenance with the *greateſt*, and practiſed by *moſt*; the forbearance whereof may *threaten, and procure danger* and diſcredit; Dan. iii. 18. Acts iv. 19. the doing whereof may promiſe and perform much *worldly gain* and *honour*. Moreover, the upright man doth not only ſtrive to do thoſe holy and vertuous actions which are in credit, and for his advantage in the world; but thoſe alſo which may expoſe him to diſgrace and *loſs even of his life* and livelihood, Dan. vi. 10. He would abſtain as well from *leſs evils*, even *from appearance of evils*, 1 Theſ. v. 22. as from *groſs ſins:* And would ſo do the *greater things of the Law, as not to leave the other undone*, Mat. xxiii. 19. But the *hypocrite* not ſo, Mark vi. 20. there is *ſome ſin* he will not leave, ſome duty he will not do, &c. Follow the oppoſition.

2. Secondly, an *upright man* is known by this. Where *GOD hath laid a ſpecial charge*, there *he will have a firſt and ſpecial reſpect to it.* As *to ſeek the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs*, Mark vi. 33. that *one thing* neceſſary, Luke x. 42. and to *ſhew a ſpecial love to the houſhold of faith*, Gal. vi. 10. Pſal. xvi. 2. To be firſt and moſt at home, reforming himſelf, *pulling the beam out*

of

of his own eye, Mat. vii. 5. To be moſt *zealous for matter of ſubſtance in Religion*, and leſs *in matter of ceremony* and circumſtance, Mat. xxiii. 23. Laſtly, his chief care will be to apply himſelf to *a conſcionable diſcharge of the duties of his particular calling*, Luke iii. 10, to 14. 1 Theſ. iv. 11. knowing that a man hath no more conſcience nor goodneſs in truth, than he hath will and deſire to ſhew it in the works of his *particular place* and *calling*. The *hypocrite* is contrary in all theſe, Mat. vii. 3, 4, 5. 1 Tim. v. 13. 2 Theſ. iii. 11.

Thirdly, *the upright man endeavoureth to approve himſelf to God, as well in ſecret*, as openly; as well in the *inward man*, as in the outward; as well in *thought*, as in word and deed. But it is quite otherwiſe with the *hypocrite*, if he may ſeem good to men, it is all he careth for, Mat. vi. 2. &c.

Fourthly, the *upright man is conſtant*; his will is that he might *always* pleaſe GOD, Acts xxiv. 16. He doth as much endeavour to approve himſelf to GOD in *proſperity*, as in adverſity, and even then ſtudieth how to be able to hold out before GOD, if his ſtate ſhould *alter*. I do not mean ſuch a conſtancy as admitteth of no intermiſſion, or obſtructions in his Chriſtian courſe. A conſtant running *ſpring* may be hindred in his courſe for a time, by damming it up; yet the *ſpring* will approve itſelf to run conſtantly; for it will be ſtill thruſting to get thorough, or to get under; or, if it can do none of theſe, it

will raiſe itſelf in time (according to its ſtrength) and get over all hindrances, and will bear down all before it, and run with a more full ſtream afterwards, by as much as it was before interrupted; *ſo it is with an upright man.* But the *hypocrite*'s religion is by fits and ſtarts; as he *calleth not on God at all times*, Job xxvii. 10. ſo it is with all other *his goodneſs*, it is but as the ſeed in ſtony ground, and amongſt thorns, Mat. xiii. 21, 22. Hoſ. vi. 4. and as a morning dew, *it endureth but for a ſeaſon.*

Fifthly, An upright man is known by the *cauſes* from which all his good actions ſpring, and to which they tend.

1. That which cauſes the *upright man* to endeavour to keep a good conſcience alway, is an *inward principle and power of grace*, cauſing him *through faith in Chriſt*, John xv. 2, 5. in and from whom, as the *root of all grace* he bringeth forth fruit; and from *love* and *fear of God*, 1 Cor. ix. 16, 17, 18. 2 Cor. v. 14. Gen. xlii. 18. and from *conſcience of the Commandment* to do the Will of GOD, 2 Cor. ii. 17. Not only fear of wrath, and hope of reward cauſeth him to abſtain from evil, and do good; but chiefly *love* of GOD, and *conſcience* of duty.

Now, if you would know when you obey out of *Conſcience* of the Commandment, and from *love* of Chriſt; conſider, 1. Whether your heart and mind ſtand bent to *obey every of God's Commandments* which you know, as well as any, and that becauſe *the ſame God* which hath given

one,

one, hath given *all*, Jam. ii. 11. If ſo, then you obey out of *Conſcience*. 2. Conſider what you do, or would do, when *Chriſt*, and his *true Religion*, and his *Commandments go alone*, and are ſeparated from all outward credit, pleaſure, and profit. Do you? or will you then cleave to *Chriſt*, and to the Commandment? Then *love* of Chriſt, *fear* of GOD, and *Conſcience* of GOD's Command was, and is the true *cauſe* of your well doing; eſpecially, if you chooſe and endeavour this, when all theſe are by the world cloathed with *peril* and *contempt*. 3. Conſider *whether you can go on in the ſtrict courſe of godlineſs alone*, and whether you reſolve to do it though you ſhall have *no Company*, but all or moſt go in the way of ſin, and alſo perſwade you thereunto. When you will walk with GOD *alone, without other company*, this ſheweth that your walking with GOD is for *his* ſake. So walked *Noah*, Gen. vii. 1. and *Elijah*, 1 Kings xix. 14. as he thought.

But the *cauſe of an hypocrites well doing* is only goodneſs of nature, or good education, or meer civility, or ſome common gifts of the ſpirit, alſo ſelf-love, ſlaviſh fear only, or the like. See this in *Ahab's repentance*, 1 Kings xxi. 27. in *Jehu his zeal*, and *Joaſh his goodneſs*, 2 Kings x. 16. *Ahab*'s humiliation was only from a ſlaviſh fear of puniſhment. The zeal of *Jehu* was only from *earthly joy, and carnal policy*; for had it been in zeal for GOD, he would as well have put down the *Calves at Dan and Bethel*, as *ſlain the Prieſts*

of Baal. And the goodneſs of *Joaſh*, it was chiefly for *Jehoiadah's ſake* whom he reverenced, and to whom he eſteemed himſelf beholden for his kingdom, and *not for God's ſake.* For the Scripture ſaith, that after *Jehoiadah*'s death, his Princes ſollicited him, and he yielded to them, and fell to Idolatry, and added this alſo, he commanded *Zechariah the High Prieſt, Jehoiadah's ſon*, to be ſlain, becauſe in the name of the Lord he reproved him for his ſin, 2 Chron. xxiv. 6, 17, 18, 20, 21.

Secondly, *the upright man's actions*, as they come from a good beginning, ſo they *are directed to a good end*, 1 Cor. x. 31. namely, the *pleaſing of God, and the Glory of his Name*, as his direct, chief, and utmoſt *end*; not as if a man might not have reſpect to *himſelf*, and to his *neighbour* alſo, propoſing to himſelf his own and his neighbour's good, as one *end* of his actions, ſometimes: but theſe muſt not be propoſed either *only*, or *chiefly*, or as the *ultimate* end, but only as they are ſubordinate to thoſe chief ends, and are the direct means to promote GOD's glory. For ſo far as a man's *health*, and *well-fare* both of body and ſoul, lyeth directly in the way to glorify *God*; he may in that reſpect *aim at* them in his actions. Our Saviour Chriſt in an inferior and ſecondary reſpect, aimed at his own glory, and at the ſalvation of man in the work of man's redemption, *When he ſaid, Glorify thy Son, and prayed that his Church might be glorified*, John xvii. 1. here he had reſpect *unto himſelf*,

and

and unto man; But when he ſaid, *that thy Son may glorify thee*; here he made GOD's *glory* his utmoſt end, and the only mark *which for itſelf he aimed at.*

The *upright* man's aim at his own, and at his neighbour's good, is not for themſelves, as if his deſire ended, and were terminated there; but in *reference to God*, the chief Good, and the higheſt end of all things.

Indeed ſuch is GOD's Wiſdom and Goodneſs, that he hath ſet before man *evil* and *good*; *Evil*, that followeth upon diſpleaſing and diſhonouring him by ſin, that man might fear and avoid ſin; *Good*, and recompence of reward, that followeth upon faith and obedience; that he might hope, and be better induced to believe and obey. This GOD did, knowing that man hath need of all *reaſonable helps* to deter him from evil, and to allure him to good. Now, GOD having ſet theſe before us, we may and ought for theſe good purpoſes to ſet them before ourſelves. Yet the upright man ſtandeth ſo *fully* and *only to God*, that (ſo far as he knoweth his own heart) he is thus reſolved, that if there were no fear of puniſhment, nor hope of reward; if there were neither *Heaven* or *Hell*, he would endeavour to pleaſe and glorify GOD, even out of that *duty* he oweth to him, and out of that high and awfull *eſtimation* which he hath of GOD's *Sovereignty*, and from that intire *love* which he beareth unto him. He that habitually in doing of common and earthly buſineſs, (though

they concern his own good) hath a will to do them with an heavenly mind, and to an heavenly *end*, certainly ſtandeth well and *uprightly* reſolved, although, in temptations and fears he doth not always feel the ſaid reſolution.

But the *hypocrite* doth not ſo; *he only or chiefly aimeth at himſelf*, Mat. vi. 2, 5, 16. and in his aim ſerveth *himſelf* in all that he doth. If he look to GOD's will and glory, as ſometimes he will pretend, he maketh that the *by*, and not the *main end*, 2 Kings x. 16. he ſeeketh GOD's will and glory not for itſelf, but for *himſelf*; not for GOD's ſake, but for his *own*. Thus did *Jehu*.

Sixthly, An upright man may know he is upright, by the *effects* that follow upon his well doing.

(Firſt,) his chief inquiry is, and *he doth obſerve, what good cometh by it, and what glory God hath had* or may have, Phil. i. 12, 20. *rather than what* earthly *credit and benefit he hath gotten to himſelf*. Or if this latter thruſt in itſelf before the other (as it will oft-times in the beſt) he is greatly *diſpleaſed* with himſelf for it. The hypocrite not ſo; all that he enquireth after, and is pleaſed with, after he hath done a good deed, is, what *applauſe* it hath amongſt men, &c.

(Secondly,) When an *upright man* hath done a praiſe worthy action, he is not puffed up with pride, and high conceit of his own worth, glorying in himſelf; but *he is humbly thankful unto God*. *Thankful*, that *God* hath enabled him to do any thing with which he *will* be well pleaſed,

and

and accept as well done. *Humble* and low in his eyes, becauſe of the manifold failings in that good work, and becauſe he hath done it no better; and becauſe whatſoever good he did, it was by the grace and power of *God*, not by any power of his own. Thus *David* ſhewed his *uprightneſs* in that ſolemn thankſgiving, when he ſaid, But *who am I, and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort? &c.* 1 Chron. xxix. 13, 14. But it is otherwiſe with the *Hypocrite:* For either he aſcribeth all the glory of his good work *to himſelf*; or if he ſeem to be thankfull, it is with a *proud thankfulneſs*, like that of the *Phariſee*, Luke xviii. 11. accompanied with diſdain of others, which in his opinion do not ſo well as himſelf.

(Thirdly,) *the upright man* having began to do well, doth not ſet down his reſt there; but *ſtriveth to do more, and to be better:* he, with the *Apoſtle, forgeteth what is behind, looking to that which is* before, Phil. iii. 13, 14, 15. not thinking that yet he hath attained to that he ſhould do. *So many as are indeed perfect and upright, do thus.* But the *hypocrite*, if he have ſome flaſh of common illumination, and ſome little taſte of thoſe things that concern the kingdom of heaven, and hath attained to a form of godlineſs, he thinketh that he hath *enough*, and needeth nothing. So did *Laodicea*, Rev. iii. 17.

Seventhly, The *upright* man, and the *hypocrite* are differenced *by their different affections and carriages, after that they are fallen into ſin*, For in

many things *we ſin all*, James iii. 2. As the upright man did not commit his ſin with that *full conſent* of will, which the hypocrite may do, and often doth; but always with ſome reluctance and oppoſition of will (though not always felt and obſerved) inſomuch that he can ſay, *It was not he, but ſin that dwelt in him*, Rom. vii. 15, 17. ſo after he is fallen into ſin, when his ſin is made known to him, he doth *not hide, excuſe*, or *defend* his ſin, Job xxxi. 33. or if he do, it is but *ſeldom* in compariſon, and but *faintly*, and not long, his conſcience ſmiting him when he doth it, or quickly after it, Job xl. 3, 4. Job xlii. 3. 6.

An *upright man* will not be much or long angry with any, that *admoniſh* him of his ſin, yea, though an enemy by malicious railing call his ſin to remembrance, as *Shemei* did to *David*, 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11, 12. even therein he can ſee *God*, and can for the moſt part abſtain from revenge, and will ſtir up his heart to godly ſorrow for his ſin. But if any like *Abigail* ſhall, 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. in wiſdom and love, admoniſh him, he *bleſſeth* GOD that ſent him or her, he bleſſeth and maketh *good uſe* of the admonition, and doth bleſs the admoniſher, and take it for a ſpecial kindneſs. Thus *David, a man according to God's own heart, as he bewrayed humane frailties* in his many and great falls; *ſo he gave clear proof of his uprightneſs*, ſooner, or later, by his behaviour after his falls: He could ſay, and his repentance did prove it, that tho',

to

to his grief and ſhame, ſometimes he departed from GOD; *yet he did not wickedly depart from GOD*, Pſal. xviii. 21. Though upright men be *tranſgreſſors*, yet they are *not wicked tranſgreſſors*, Pſal. lix. 5. there is great difference between *theſe two*. And though there be evil in their actions, yea in ſome of them *filthineſs*, and grievious iniquity, *yet in their* filthineſs *is not lewdneſs*, Ezek. xxiv. 13. *as* GOD complains of *Judah*, that is, *they are not obſtinate and rebellious*, ſtanding out againſt the means of purging and reclaiming them. For when GOD doth correct them by his Word or Providence, they are *willing to reform* whatſoever is diſcovered to be amiſs. Job xlii. 6.

Moreover, although the upright man may be often drawn into a way that is not good, and often through his weakneſs and heedleſneſs, fall into a ſtate that is not good; yet *he doth not ſet himſelf in a way that is not good*, Pſal. xxxvi. 2, 3, 4. nor yet like the *ſwine*, delight to wallow, and lye in it. When an upright man is fallen, and is recovered out of his ſpiritual ſwoon, when he is come to himſelf, he is like a man *ſenſible* of his bones broken out of joint; he is not well, nor at quiet, nor his own man, until he hath confeſſed his ſin, repented of it, aſked pardon and grace, and renewed his peace with GOD. An *upright man* is likewiſe like the *needle* of the *Mariner's Compaſs*, which may by violent motion, ſometimes ſwerve to the *Weſt*, or to the *Eaſt*; but ſtandeth ſteady no way but towards the

the *North*, and if it be truly touched with a *Loadſtone*, hath no reſt but in that *one point*; ſo an upright man may, through boiſterous temptations, and ſtrong allurements, oftentimes look towards the pleaſure, gain, and glory of this preſent world: but becauſe he is *truly touched with the ſanctifying Spirit of God*, he ſtill inclineth towards *God*; and hath no reſt until his mind is *ſteadily fixed* on Chriſt and Heaven. But it is not ſo with the *Hypocrite*: He is in each particular directly contrary. I leave the full and particular application thereof to yourſelf.

Eighthly, You will find the moſt evident mark of *uprightneſs* from your ſenſe of *hypocriſy* in yourſelf, and from your *conflict* with it, Gal. v. 17. *The upright man is ſenſible of too much hypocriſy, and guile in his heart*, Pſal. li. 10. Yea, ſo much, that often times he maketh it a queſtion whether he have *any uprightneſs*; and, until he hath brought himſelf to due trial by the balance of the *Sanctuary* (the *Word and Goſpel of Chriſt*) he feareth he is ſtill an *hypocrite*. But there is nothing which he would oppoſe more, nothing which he complaineth of, or prayeth to God more againſt than this *hypocriſy*, nor is there any thing that he longeth after, laboureth and prayeth for more, than that he might *love and ſerve the Lord in ſincerity*, 1 Cor. ix. 26. All this plainly ſheweth, that this man *would be upright*, 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. which hearty deſire ſo to be, is *uprightneſs* itſelf. The *hypocrite* contrariwiſe, he neglecteth to obſerve his *guile*, and

falſe-

falſe-heartedneſs in religion; or if he can ſee it, he is *not much* troubled at it; but ſuffereth it to *reign* in him: And as he boaſteth of his *good* actions, ſo likewiſe of his *good* heart, and *good* meaning in all that he doth (except when his lewdneſs and hypocriſy is diſcovered to his face) *flattering himſelf in his own eyes, till his iniquity is found to be hateful*, Pſal. xxxvi. 2.

Before I leave this, I will anſwer a queſtion or two, concerning judging of *uprightneſs* by theſe marks.

Firſt, whether an upright man can at *all times* diſcern his uprightneſs, by theſe or any other marks?

Ordinarily, If he will impartially compare himſelf with theſe evidences, *he may*. But at *ſometimes* it ſo happeneth that *he cannot*; namely, in the caſe of *ſpiritual deſertions*, when *God*, for his neglect of keeping his peace with him, is hid from him for a time, and when in his diſpleaſure he looketh angrily, and writeth bitter things againſt him. Likewiſe, when he is in ſome violent and prevalent temptation, and thereby caſt into a kind of Spiritual ſwoon, and in ſuch like caſes. But a man muſt not judge himſelf to be *dead*, becauſe when he is aſleep, or in a ſwoon, he hath *no feeling*, or *ſenſe* of life.

Whether is it neceſſary, that a man ſhould find *all theſe marks* of uprightneſs in him, if he be upright?

No. Although, if he were in condition to judge himſelf, and try himſelf thoroughly, he might

might find them *all* in him; yet *if he find moſt, or but ſome of theſe*, he ſhould comfort himſelf with thoſe, untill he find the *reſt*.

Take heed therefore that you do not as many, when they hear and ſee many ſigns given of this, or any other needful grace; if they cannot approve themſelves by *all*, they will make a queſtion whether they have the grace or no. One may give you twenty ſigns of natural life, as Seeing, Hearing, Talking, Breathing, &c. What though you cannot prove yourſelf by all? Yet if you know you feel, or breath, or move, you know you are alive by *any one* of theſe.

What is to be done when you cannot find that you *are upright*, whereas heretofore ſometimes you did hope that you were?

Do you preſently conclude you are an hypocrite; but *look back unto former proofs of uprightneſs*. And though you have for the preſent, loſt your *evidence and aſſurance* of Heaven, yet give not over your *poſſeſſion* of what you have had, nor your hope. A man that hath once had poſſeſſion of houſe and lands, if his ſtate be queſtioned, will *ſeek out* his evidence; and, ſuppoſe that he hath laid aſide, or loſt his evidece thereof; yet he is not ſuch a fool as to *give over his poſſeſſion*, or his right: but will ſeek till he find his *evidences*, or if he cannot find them, will *ſearch the Records*, and get them from thence. So muſt you in this caſe, you muſt ſeek for your evidence again, Pſal. li. 12. Howſoever, *cleave faſt to God and to his promiſes*, Acts xi. 23. Job. xiii. 15, 16.

frequently

frequently renew your acts of faith on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and continue to perſevere in the ways of Godlineſs as you are able, and you ſhall not be long, before you ſhall *know* that you be *upright:* or if you attain not to this, yet be ſure *the LORD will know you to be his*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. though you do not ſo certainly know that he is yours. But of this more, when I ſhall ſpeak of *peace of Conſcience.*

But in trying *my uprightneſs*, I find many of the ſigns of *hypocriſy* in me. I do not find myſelf to be ſo *univerſal* in my reſpect to all God's Commandments as I ſhould; I do not hate all ſins *alike*; I find myſelf inclined to ſome ſin more than other, and I am readier to neglect ſome duty than other; I cannot ſo *thoroughly* ſeek God's Kingdom as I ſhould; I am readier to find fault with *others*, than to amend *my own*, &c. I find that I am not *ſo conſtant* as I ought to be in holy duties, and I have too much reſpect to *myſelf* in all that I do, and too little to God's glory: In reading all the notes of hyporiſy, except the laſt, I find *hypocriſy*, nay, much hypocriſy to be in me; muſt I not therefore judge myſelf to be *an hypocrite?*

No. For *truth* of uprightneſs may be in the ſame perſon, in whom there is ſenſe of much *hypocriſy*; nay this, to *feel* hypocriſy with *diſlike*, is the certain evidence of truth of uprightneſs. Indeed if you felt not thus much, you might fear you were not upright. All that you have ſaid (if it be true) only proveth that you *have* hypocriſy

hypocriſy remaining in you, and that you feel it. You muſt remember that I told you, that not the *having*, but the *reigning* of hypocriſy maketh an hypocrite. Beſides, a man may have an *univerſal* reſpect to all GOD's Commandments, and yet *not an equal* reſpect to all: If you ſee and bewail your ſin, and fight againſt your hypocriſy when you feel it, aſſure yourſelf you are no hypocrite.

What if a man finds indeed by theſe notes of *hypocriſy*, that it doth *reign* in him.

He muſt know that *he is for the preſent hated of God, and in a damnable eſtate*, yet his ſtate is *not deſperate*. If the *hypocrite* forſake his *hypocriſy* and become upright, *he ſhall not die* for his hypocriſy; if this be true of a ſinners forſaking of all ſin, then, it is true of this in particular, of forſaking his hypocriſy; but in the uprightneſs wherein he liveth, *he ſhall live*, Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. What *Chriſt* ſaid to hypocritical and lukewarm *Laodicea*, that I ſay to all ſuch: they muſt be *zealous*, they muſt amend and be *upright*, Rev. iii. 19. hypocriſy is as pardonable as any other ſin to him that is penitent, and that believeth in *Chriſt Jeſus*, Iſa. i. 11, 16, 18.

By this which I have written, you may plainly ſee, (1.) That you *ought* to be upright; (2.) *What it is* to be upright; (3.) *Whether* you be upright or no. It concerns you therefore to *hate* and avoid *hypocriſy*, and to *love* and embrace *ſincerity*. Which that you may do; make uſe of theſe

theſe motives and means which follow in the next Sections.

§. V. *Diſſwaſives from Hypocriſy, and Motives to Uprightneſs.*

IF you would abandon hypocriſy, conſider the *diſſwaſives*; taken from *the evils and miſchiefs* that accompany it where it *reigneth*. And how *troubleſome and hateful it is*, where it doth *not reign*.

Firſt, *Hypocriſy taketh away all the goodneſs of the beſt actions*. They are good only in name, not indeed. The repentance and obedience of an *hypocrite* is none, *becauſe it is feigned*; his faith is no faith, *becauſe it is not unfeigned*; his love is no love, *becauſe it is not from a pure heart without diſſimulation*, 1 Tim. i. 5. Judge the ſame of all other graces and good actions of an *hypocrite*.

Secondly, *All the good actions of an hypocrite, are together with himſelf wholly loſt*, Luke xiii. 25. Mat. vii. 22. Mat. xxv. 11, 12. Such as Preaching, Hearing, Praying, Almſgiving, &c.

Thirdly, *Hypocriſy* (in whom it reigns) doth not only take away all goodneſs from the beſt gifts and actions, and cauſe the loſs of all reward from GOD, but it *poiſoneth and turneth the beſt actions into moſt loathſome and abominable ſins*, Iſa. lxvi. 3. Inſomuch that in thoſe good works wherein the hypocrite ſeemeth *to make haſt to Heaven*, he ſtill *runneth poſt to Hell*. For ſuch allowed hypocriſy is *worſe* than profeſſed wickedneſs,

neſs, Rev. iii. 15. It is ſo odious in God's ſight, that for it he will plague thoſe in whom it ruleth with his *ſevereſt* judgments. For the hypocriſy of men profeſſing the truth, bringeth the *Name, Religion*, and *beſt Services of God* into diſgrace and contempt, Rom. ii. 24. and cauſeth the beſt actions and beſt men to be *ſuſpected*. For ſuch as have not ſpiritual wiſdom to judge rightly, ſtumble thereat, and forbear the exerciſes of Religion, and the company of thoſe that be religious, ignorantly judging all that profeſs that Religion to be alike. Beſides, *Hypocriſy is high treaſon againſt God*; for it is a gilding over, and ſetting the King's ſtamp upon *baſe* mettal. It is tempting and mocking of God to his Face, Pſal. lxxviii. 36. A ſin ſo abominable, that his holy Juſtice cannot endure it.

Fourthly, God's *judgments* on ſuch hypocrites are manifold. *For this cauſe God giveth them over to believe lies*, 2 Theſ. ii. 10, 11. Heb. vi. 5, 6. even Popery, or any other damnable error or hereſy. Hence it is that God giveth them over many times to fall from *ſeeming* goodneſs to *real* wickedneſs, and from one evil to another, Luke viii. 18. even unto *final Apoſtacy*, Heb. x. 25, 26. Job xxvii. 8. And at laſt when *God taketh away an Hypocrite's Soul*, he is ſure not only to loſe his *Hope* (which added much to his *Hell*) but to be made to *feel that which he would not fear*, being ranked with thoſe *Sinners*, Mat. xxiv. 51. which ſhall be puniſhed with the greateſt ſeverity *in the eternal vengeance of Hell-fire*. For after

after that an hypocrite hath *played the civil and religious man for a while upon the Stage of this World*; his laſt Act, when his life is ended, is to be indeed, and to *act to the life, the part of an incarnate and tormenting Devil.* He ſhall have his portion with the *Devil* and his *Angels*, Mat. xxv. 41. *When fear hath ſurpriſed the Hypocrites: who ſhall dwell with devouring fire; Who ſhall dwell with everlaſting burning*; ſaith the Prophet, Iſa. xxxiii. 14. Happy were it for them if this warning might effectually awaken them out of this damning ſecurity.

Conſider likewiſe; that *Hypocriſy* doth much *harm*, even there where it doth not *reign*, and that more or leſs, according as it is more or leſs mortified.

For firſt, it *bringeth the ſoul into a general conſumption of grace; no ſin more.* Secondly, it *blindeth the mind, and inſenſibly hardeneth the heart; no ſin more.* Thirdly, it *maketh a man formal and careleſs in the beſt actions.* Fourthly, *it cauſeth fearful ſins*, and *decays of grace.* Fifthly, it *deprives a man of Peace of Conſcience* in ſuch a manner, that a *ſpiritual Phyſician* can hardly faſten any hope or comfort upon him, on whoſe Conſcience doth lye the guilt of *Hypocriſy*; yea, hardly upon him that doth but *fear* he is guilty: For he refuſeth the comfort of his good affections and actions, ſaying, all that I did was but in *hypocriſy.* Sixthly, and laſtly; Beſides that, it bringeth *many temporal judgments*; *it cauſeth a man to loſe many of his good works done in Hypocriſy,*

eriſy, 2 John 8. 1 Cor. iii. 15. though through GOD's mercy he loſe not *himſelf*, becauſe he is ſtill found in Chriſt, and Chriſt's Spirit of *uprightneſs* reigneth in him.

Now to induce you to love Uprightneſs, and to labour after it; *Conſider the good which accompanieth uprightneſs*, Firſt, temporal and outward: but Secondly, and chiefly, that which is ſpiritual and eternal.

(1.) Uprightneſs hath the *promiſe of this life*: 1 Tim. iv. 8. It is a means to keep off *Judgments*, Pſal. xci. 9, 10, 14. Pſal. xcvii. 11. or in due time to remove them. *If affliction like a dark night* over-ſpread *the upright, for their corruption* and trial for a time, yet *light is ſown for them, and in due time will ariſe unto them.* The upright ſhall not want health, wealth, friends, or any thing that can be *good* for them, Pſal. xxxiv. 9, 10. Moreover, this *uprightneſs* doth not only *provide well for a perſon's ſelf; but if any thing can procure a bleſſing to his Children, and his Childrens Children, Uprightneſs will*, Prov. xx. 7. Pſal. cxii. 2. The *Holy Ghoſt* ſaith, *the generation of the upright ſhall be bleſſed.*

(2.) The *ſpiritual bleſſings* which belong to the upright, are manifold.

The upright man is GOD's *favourite*, even his *delight*, Pſal. xi. 20.

He is hereby *aſſured of his Salvation*, Pſal. xv. 1, 2. For although an upright man fall into many grievous ſins, yet *preſumptuous ſins* ſhall not reign over him, Pſal. xix. 13. he ſhall be

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kept from the great Tranſgreſſion; he ſhall never ſin the *ſin unto death*; Yea, he ſhall be kept from the *dominion* of every ſin.

By uprightneſs a man is *ſtrengthened in the inward man*, Job xix. 23, 25. it being that *Girdle* that buckleth and holdeth together the chief parts of the Chriſtian Armour, Ephe. vi. 14. Nay, *it is that which giveth efficacy to every piece of that Armour*, it ſtrengtheneth the back and loins; yea, the very heart of him that is begirt with it.

He that is upright, *is ſure to have his prayers heard*, Jer. xxix. 13. and to be made able to *profit by the Word of God*, and by all his holy Ordinances. *Do not my words* (ſaith *God*) *do good to him that walketh uprightly*, Mic. ii. 7.

The *upright man's ſervices to God in* prayer, hearing, receiving Sacraments, &c. though performed with much weakneſs and imperfections, *ſhall through Chriſt be accepted of God*, Chron. xxx. 18, 19, 20. Nay, where there is not power, *the will of the upright man is taken for the deed*, 2 Cor. viii. 12. and where there is power and deed both, even there the uprightneſs and readineſs of the will is taken for *more than the deed*, according to that commendation of them, who were ſaid not only to do, *but to be willing* a year ago, 2 Cor. viii. 10. For many may *do* good things, which yet do them not with an *upright* will, and *ready* mind.

6. The *upright man hath always matter of boldneſs before men.* He can make an *Apology* and *Defence*

Defence for himſelf againſt the ſlanders of wicked men, and againſt the accuſations of Satan, Acts xxiii. 1. Acts xxiv. 14, 15, 16. who are ready upon every ſlight occaſion, to reproach him as an *hypocrite*, and ſay, that all which he doth is but *in hypocriſy*; but he can give all them the lie, that charge him with diſſimulation or hypocriſy. He knoweth more of his *hypocriſy* than they can tell him; he findeth fault with it, and accuſeth himſelf for it, more than they can do: yet this he can ſay, he *alloweth it not*, he *hateth* it, and his heart is *upright* towards GOD. He careth not though his *adverſary write a book againſt him*, Job xxxi. 35, 36. ch. xix. 23, 24, 25. He hath his defence; if men will receive it, they may; if not, he dareth to appeal to *Heaven*; For *his Record is on high*. He hath always a *witneſs both within him*, and in *Heaven* for him, Job xvi. 19. 2 Cor. i. 12.

7. Uprightneſs is an excellent *Preventer*, and *Cure* of deſpair, ariſing from accuſations of *Conſcience*; even of a wounded *Spirit*, of which *Solomon* ſaith, who can bear it? For either it *keepeth it off*, Job xxvii. 5, 6. Or if it be wounded, this Uprightneſs in believing, and in willingneſs to reform and obey, is a moſt ſovereign means to *cure* and *quiet* it, or at leaſt it will allay the *extremity* of it.

Not but that an *upright* man may have *trouble of mind*, and that in ſome extremity; but he may thank himſelf for it, becauſe he will not ſee and acknowledge that *Uprightneſs* which he hath,

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and doth not properly apply it, or cheriſh it; which if he would do, there is nothing (next to the precious blood of Jeſus Chriſt) would anſwer the charges of his accuſing Conſcience, or bring more feeling comfort to his ſoul, ſooner or better than his will.

8. The *upright man hath an holy boldneſs with God.* When *Abimelech* could ſay, *In the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands I have done this*, Gen. xx. 5. he had boldneſs to expoſtulate and reaſon his caſe with GOD. An upright man in his ſickneſs, or in any other calamity; yea, at all times, when he needeth GOD's help, can be *bold* to come before GOD, notwithſtanding his *ſin that remaineth in him*, his original ſin, and his many *actual tranſgreſſions.* So did *Hezekiah* upon his death bed (as he thought) ſaying, *Remember O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done good in thy ſight*, Iſa. xxxviii. 3. So did *Nehemiah*, ſaying, *Remember me O my GOD concerning this, and ſpare me according to the greatneſs of thy mercy*, Neh. xiii. 22. This Uprightneſs giveth *boldneſs* with GOD, but without all Preſumption of merit, as you ſee in good *Nehemiah.*

9. Laſtly, Whatſoever the *upright man's beginning was*, and whatſoever his changes have been in the times that have gone over him, both in the outward and inward man, in his progreſs of Chriſtianity; mark this, *his end ſhall be peace.* Pſal. xxxvii. 37. The *laſt and everlaſting part* which

which he ſhall act indeed, and to the life, *to everlaſting happineſs*, Prov. xxviii. 18.

And, to contract all theſe motives into a ſhort, but final Sum, *The Lord is a Sun and Shield, The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly*, Pſal. lxxxiv 11.

§. VI. *Means to ſubdue Hypocriſy, and promote Uprightneſs.*

IT remaineth now that you ſhould know by what means you may *abate* and *ſubdue* hypocriſy; and may *get*, *keep*, and *increaſe* this grace of uprightneſs.

Firſt, you muſt, by a due and ſerious conſideration of the *evils* of hypocriſy, and *advantages* of uprightneſs, *fix in your heart* (by the help of Chriſt) *a loathing and deteſtation of the one; and an admiration, love, and longing deſire of the other*; with a ſincere purpoſe of *heart*, *(by the grace of God) to be upright.* This muſt firſt be wrought, for until a man ſtand thus affected, and reſolved againſt *hypocriſy*, and for *uprightneſs*, he will take *no pains* to be free from the one, nor yet to obtain the other.

Secondly, you muſt *be ſenſible of that Hypocriſy which yet is in you, and of the want of uprightneſs*, though not altogether, yet *in great part.* For no man will be at the pains to *remove* that diſeaſe whereof he thinketh he is ſufficiently *cured*, though indeed he judge it to be never ſo dange-

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rous; nor yet for to *obtain* that good of which he thinketh that he hath *enough* already, though he eſteem it never ſo excellent.

Hitherto both in the motives and means, I have endeavoured to gain the *will*; to will and reſolve to be upright, and to be willing to uſe all good means to be upright. Now thoſe means that will *effect* it follow.

Thirdly, do your beſt to root out thoſe vices that *beget* and *nouriſh Hypocriſy*; and to plant in their room thoſe graces which *produce* and *ſtrengthen uprightneſs*.

The chief vices are *Ignorance, and unbelief, ſelf-love, pride*, and an *irreſolved and unſettled heart*, unſtable and not firmly reſolved what to chooſe, whereby it wavers and is *divided* between two objects, *dividing the heart between God, and ſomething elſe*, Zep. i. 5. either falſe gods, a man's ſelf, or the world; whence it is, that the Scriptures call an hypocrite a man that hath *an heart and an heart*, one that is *double minded*, James iv. 8.

The graces are, *a right knowledge of GOD and of his will, and faith in him*; *Self-denial, Humility*, and lowly mindedneſs; *Stability*, and *Singleneſs of Heart* towards GOD.

For, the more *clear light* you can get into your *mind*, the *more truth* you will have in your *will*. And when you can ſo deny yourſelf, that you can quite *renounce* yourſelf, and *firſt give yourſelf to Chriſt, and unto God*, 2 Cor. viii. 5, 10, 11. then there will follow readineſs of mind,

and heartineſs of will, to do whatſoever may *pleaſe* GOD. Alſo the more *humility* you have in your mind, the more *uprightneſs* you will have in your heart: For *while the ſoul is liſted up, that man's heart is not upright in him*, ſaith GOD, Hab. ii. 4. Laſtly, when your *eye is ſingle*, and your *heart one*, and undivided, you will not allow yourſelf to be in part *for God*, and in part *for Mammom*, Mat. vi. 22, 23, 24. in part *for GOD*, and in part *for your luſts*, whether of the fleſh, or of the world, or of the pride of life; you will not give your *name* and *lips* to GOD, and reſerve your *heart* for the world, the fleſh, or the devil; but by your will, GOD ſhall be *all in all* unto you.

Fourthly, if you would be in earneſt and in truth againſt ſin, and for goodneſs, you muſt *repreſent ſin to your thoughts as the moſt hurtful, bateful, and moſt loathſome thing in the world*, Gen. xxxix. 9. and muſt *repreſent the obeying and doing of God's will unto your mind, as the beſt and moſt profitable, moſt amiable, moſt ſweet and excellent thing in the world*, Pſal. xix. 7, 8, 11. Pſal. cxix. 72. Hereby you may affect your heart with a thorough hatred, and *loathing of ſin*, and with an hearty love and *delight in God's Commandments*, Pſal. cxix. 97. If you do thus, you cannot chooſe but ſhun ſin, and follow after that which is good, *not in pretence* only, but *indeed* and in truth, with all your heart. For, a man is always hearty *againſt* what he truly hateth, and *for* what he dearly loveth.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, if you would be ſincere, and do all your actions for *God's* glory, and for his ſake, *you muſt*, by the light of GOD's Word, and *Works, fully inform and perſwade yourſelf of GOD's Sovereignty and abſoluteneſs*, and that, becauſe he is the *firſt* abſolute and chief good, he muſt needs be the *laſt*, the abſolute and chief end of all ends. For he, that is *Alpha*, muſt needs be the *Omega*, of all things, Rev. i. 8. Since all things are *of God*, Rom. xi. 36. and ſince he made all things for himſelf; therefore you ſhould, in all things you do, be *upright*, Rev. iv. 11. intending *GOD's glory* as your principal and utmoſt end in all things, 1 Cor. x. 28, 31.

Sixthly, *Conſider often and ſeriouſly*, that how cloſe and ſecret ſoever *hypocriſy* may lurk, yet it *cannot be hid from the eyes of God, with whom you have to do*, and before whom you walk, Heb. iv. 12, 13. *who will bring every ſecret thing to Judgment*, Eccleſ. xii. 14.

Wherefore take continual notice, that you are in the ſight of *God that made your heart*, Pſal. xciv. 9, 10, 11. Pſal. li. 6. who requireth *truth of heart*, who perfectly knoweth the guile or truth of your heart. This will much further your *uprightneſs*; for who can dare to promote and diſſemble in the preſence of his *Lord*, and *Judge*, who knoweth his diſſimulation better than himſelf?

Seventhly, *Unite yourſelf more and more ſtrongly unto your Head Chriſt Jeſus*, by faith and love; continually renounce your own wiſdom, righte-

ouſneſs, and ſtrength, that you may every day be more and more *united unto him. Grow daily in faith and hope in him, from whence you ſhall more and more partake of his fulneſs*, Phil. iii. 8, 9, 10, &c. *even for his grace*, John i. 12, 16. For the meaſure of your uprightneſs, will uſually be in proportion to your faith. For as the *branch* partaketh more of the *vine*, John xv. 5. ſo it draweth more virtue and beareth more good fruit.

Eighthly, *You muſt*, with an holy jealouſy of the deceitfulneſs of your hearts, *examine yourſelf often*; not only of what you have done, and now do, but of the *motives* and *ends* of your religious actions; as was before directed in the *marks* of uprightneſs. *Lay yourſelf often to the rule of uprightneſs*, that is *the will of God*, and finding yourſelf defective, ſtudy, and labour to *amend*, and be *upright*, and that to the utmoſt of your power.

Ninthly, *Exerciſe that meaſure of uprightneſs which you have*, and be *more thankful* for the little you have, *than diſcouraged* as many are, becauſe they have no more. If you find yourſelf upright, be abundantly *thankful*, and reſolve to keep and increaſe it by all means. *Keep your heart thus with all diligence*, Prov. iv. 23. then, as all other graces, ſo this of *uprightneſs* will increaſe in the uſing.

Tenthly, and laſtly, uſe the means of all means, the *Catholicon* for all graces, which is *Prayer*. Think not to gain uprightneſs by the power

power of your *own might*: but in the ſenſe of your inſufficiency, repair often to *God* by *prayer*; even to him who *made* your heart, in whoſe *hands* your heart is, who beſt *knoweth* the crooked windings and turnings of your heart, who only can *amend* and *rectify* your heart: Who, becauſe he *delighteth* in an upright heart, and hath *commanded* you to ſeek it in the humble uſe of his means, will aſſuredly give it. Thus *David*; *Renew, O Lord, a right Spirit within me*; And, *Let my Heart be ſound in thy Statutes*, Pſal. li. 10. Pſal. cxix. 80.

CHAP. XII.

§. I. *Of lawful Care, and of Freedom from anxious Care.*

WHEN you have thus exerciſed an holy care to walk with GOD in *uprightneſs*, according to the foregoing directions: *It remaineth that you free yourſelf of all other care, and that you reſt holily ſecure in God: enjoying your moſt bleſſed peace with him*, according to the divine direction. *Be careful in nothing, &c.* Philip. iv. 6, 7.

The *Care* which is commanded, and *Careſulneſs* which is forbidden differ thus;

Lawful Care is an act of Wiſdom, whereby, after that a perſon hath rightly judged what he ought to do, what not, what good he is to purſue, and

what evil is by him to be ſhunned, or removed; he, accordingly with more or leſs intention and eagerneſs of mind, as the things to be obtained or avoided are greater or leſs, is careful to find out, and diligent to uſe lawful and fit means for the good, and againſt the evil, and that with all circumſpection; that he may omit nothing that may aſſiſt him, nor commit any thing that may hinder him in his lawful deſigns; Which, when he hath done, he reſteth quiet, and careth no further; caſting all care of ſucceſs upon God to whom it belongeth, expecting a good iſſue upon the uſe of good means, yet reſolving, howſoever, to ſubmit his will to God's will, whatſoever the ſucceſs ſhall be.

Sinful Care is an act of fear, and diſtruſt, exerciſing not only the head, but chiefly the heart, to the diſquietude and diſturbance thereof, cauſing a perſon inordinately, and anxiouſly to purſue his deſires, perplexing himſelf with doubtful and fearful thoughts about ſucceſs.

Lawful care may be called *a provident care*, and *care of the head.*

Carefulneſs may be called *a diſtruſtful care*, or *a care of the heart.*

This *provident care* is not only lawful, but *neceſſary*; for without it, a man cannot poſſibly be ſecure, nor have reaſonable hope of good ſucceſs.

This *provident care* is commended to you, Prov. vi. 6, 7, 8. in the *examples* of the moſt wiſe and induſtrious *brute* creatures; and in the *examples* of the moſt prudent *men.*

As

As of *Jacob's* care of his ſafety, how to eſcape the rage of his brother *Eſau*, Gen. 32, and 33. Of St. *Paul's care* of the *Churches*, 2 Cor. xi. 28. of the *Corinthians* care and ſtudy to reform themſelves, 2 Cor. vii. 11. of the good *noble woman's* care to entertain the Lord's *Prophet*, 2 Kings iv. 10. of the *good houſe-wives* care of well ordering and maintaining her family, Prov. xxx. 13, &c. The ſame good *examples* you have in the *care of godly unmarried men and women*, Cor. vii. 32, 34. how to pleaſe GOD, and that they might be holy both in body and ſoul: and of *Mary* who *cared for that one thing needful*, Luke x. 42.

Moreover, you are *Commanded this provident care*, namely, to *ſtudy to be quiet, to be no buſy-body, not idle:* but to *labour in a lawful calling the thing that is good*, 1 Theſ. iv. 11. Ephe. iv. 28. Alſo to *walk honeſtly towards them that are without*, 1 Theſ. iv. 12. To *endeavour* ſo to walk towards GOD's people that *you keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*, Ephe. iv. 3. To *provide for your own*, 1 Tim. v. 8. To *give diligence to make your calling and election ſure*, 2 Pet. i. 5. To *ſtudy to maintain good works*, Tit. iii. 8. But amongſt all, you are commanded *chiefly to ſeek the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs*, Mat. vi. 33. as the beſt means to free you from all unlawful cares.

The *Properties* of *lawful Care* are theſe:

§. I. *Deſcription of lawful Care.*

FIRST, The *ſeat* wherein lawful care reſideth, *is the head*; for that is the ſeat of underſtanding, wiſdom, and diſcretion; but *carefulneſs* is chiefly ſeated in the heart.

Secondly, *Godly care is always about good and lawful things*, it hath a good *object*, and good *matter* to work upon, and be converſant about: propoſing always ſome *good* thing to be the end, which it would attain. It is *not a care about evil*, as how to *make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof*, Rom. xiii. 14. like *Ahab's* and *Jezebel's* carefulneſs for *Naboth's* vineyard and life, 1 Kings 21. Nor yet like *Abſalom's* careſulneſs, how to uſurp his Father's Kingdom, 2 Sam. 15. nor like *Hamans*, how to deſtroy the *Jews*, Heſt. iii. 9. neither is it like the carefulneſs of thoſe of whom *Solomon* ſpeaketh, *who cannot ſleep unleſs they do miſchief*, Prov. iv. 16.

Thirdly, *This holy provident care maketh choice only of lawful means, to obtain this lawful end. David* had care of his own life; therefore he got intelligence from *Jonathan* of *Saul's* evil purpoſes towards him, 1 Sam. xx. i. He did *fly* and hide himſelf from *Saul*, 1 Sam. xxiv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10, 11. but would by no means *lay violent hands upon his anointed Lord and King*; though he had fair opportunities, and ſtrong ſolicitations to kill him, he falling twice into his power,

power, and was earneſtly called upon by his ſervants to diſpatch him.

Obſerve likewiſe *Jacob's care* to ſave himſelf, and all that he had, from the fury of his brother *Eſau*, Gen. 33. he uſed only *fit* and *lawful* means. For though a man's intention be never ſo good, and the thing cared for be good, yet if the means to get it be *unlawful*, the care is evil. To care how to *provide* for yourſelf, and yours, is in itſelf good and needful; but ſo to care, that you run to *unjuſt* and *indirect* means, maketh it evil. *To care how to be ſaved, is an excellent care*, but when you ſeek to attain it by ways of your own, or of other mens inventions: as by idolatrous worſhip, and voluntary Religion, or looking to be ſaved by your own works, by Purgatory, Pope's Pardons, and Indulgences, as the *Papiſts* do, Col. ii. 18, &c. *this is a moſt ſinful carefulneſs*. To care how to bring *glory to God is the beſt care*, Rom. iii. 7, 8. but if to procure it, you *uſe lying for God*, or any other unlawful means, it is an *unholy care*.

Fourthly, This *laudable, holy care, is a full, and impartial care*, even, of *all* things belonging to a perſons condition. It is not ſuch a *care* of the *body* and *ſtate*, as cauſeth neglect of the *ſoul*. Neither is it ſuch a *care* of the *ſoul*, as is attended with neglect of the *body, life, eſtate*, or *name*, 1 Tim. v. 23. It is not ſuch a *care* of the *private*, as to neglect the *public* good, or of the *public*, ſo as to neglect the *private*. It extendeth itſelf to *whatſoever God* hath committed to

our *care*; both for ourſelves and others. Thoſe who care only for themſelves, and for the things only of this life, *ſin in their care.* Likewiſe thoſe who ſeem to care only how to pleaſe GOD, and to ſave their ſouls, yet weakly or careleſly *neglect* their bodies, and affairs of their families belonging to their place, or the common good of others in Church or Common-weal, all theſe are *partial, and do ſin in their care.* All worldlings and ſelf-loving men offend in the *firſt* kind. All ſuperſtitious, and indiſcreetly devout men offend in the *ſecond* kind: alſo all ſuch, who for devotion ſake *neglect* the neceſſary duties of their particular calling.

Fifthly, *Lawful care, is a diſcreet and well ordered care*; it puteth difference between things *more* or *leſs* good, and between things *neceſſary* or not neceſſary, between things *more* neceſſary, and *leſs* neceſſary. In all things it would keep *firſt due order*, then *due meaſure.* Firſt, *caring moſt for GOD's glory*, as *Moſes* and *Paul* did, Exod. xxxii. 12, 32. Rom. ix. 3. who cared more for the glory of GOD than for their own lives, honours, and welfare. Next, it *careth for that one thing needful*, how the *ſoul* may be ſaved in the day of the LORD, Luke x. 42. As any thing is beſt, or more needful for the preſent, that is cared for, *firſt, and chiefly*, Mat. vi. 33. If all cannot be cared for, the *leſs* worthy things, the *leſs* neceſſary for the preſent, and thoſe things to which we are *leaſt* bound, ſhould be omitted.

Secondly,

Secondly, As lawful care doth through diſcretion keep due order, *ſo it keepeth due meaſure, ſeeking Spiritual and Heavenly Things with more diligence and zeal than thoſe that be temporal and earthly*, 2 Pet. i. 5. caring for the things of this life with great *moderation*, without eagerneſs, and greedineſs of deſire; always proportioning the care to the *goodneſs* and *worth* of that which is to be cared for. Now becauſe the world is to be loved and uſed as *if we loved and uſed it not*, 1 Cor. vii. 31, 32. it being of little worth in compariſon: therefore the cares about it in compariſon of the beſt and moſt neceſſary things muſt be, as if you *cared not*.

§. II. *Signs of immoderate Care.*

THEN *cares of the things of this life are inordinate* and immoderate, when they will not give men leave to take the *comforts and natural refreſhments of this life*, Eccleſ. v. 12. as ſleep, meat, and drink, and other needful and lawful things: but eſpecially when they hinder them from the *exerciſe*, *profitable* uſe, or *due performance of religious duties*, Mat. xiii. 21. Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. Mat. vi. 21.

2. When they are *firſt and chief* in a man's thoughts; the mind always running upon them.

3. When they *cauſe a man* (out of his eager *haſt to be* rich and to enjoy the world) *to uſe unlawful and indirect means*, Prov. xxviii. 20, 22. or to engage in dealing and trading beyond his ſkill,

ſkill, ſtock, and means well to manage the ſame.

4. When they cauſe a man *ſo to mind his worldly buſineſs*, that he thinketh *nothing well done*, or ſafe, *if his eye or hand be not in it*, and if it be not in his own cuſtody; although there is cauſe why others ſhould be uſed, and intruſted with it.

Sixthly, *this laudable, holy care, is confined within its due meaſure and bounds*, as well as fixed upon its proper objects. It knoweth its due *limits* how far to go, and where to ſtay. Namely, when it hath choſen a lawful object, and hath found out and uſed lawful means, 2 Tim. i. 12. and applieth itſelf to one thing as well as another, in due order and meaſure, it ſtayeth there, caring no further; but *waiteth patiently GOD's pleaſure for good ſucceſs*, Pſal. xxxvii. 7. caſting all care of event and ſucceſs upon GOD by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving.

§. III. *The Duty of quiet Truſt in GOD.*

BY what hath been ſaid, you may ſee that although you may and muſt *take thought* about many things, according to the directions there given; yet you muſt, as the *Apoſtle* ſaith, be *careful* in nothing, with an anxious, perplexing care.

This is now the matter to be inſiſted on; *viz.* That *God would have none of his ſervants and children to be inordinately careful about any thing; nor yet,* (when in obedience to his Command-

ment;

ment, and due obſervance of his providence, they have diligently uſed lawful means for the attainment of all lawful things) *that they ſhould diſtreſs themſelves at all about the iſſue or ſucceſs.* He would not that they ſhould ſuffer their minds to hang in doubtful ſuſpence and fear about them; but would that they ſhould commit their ways unto him, and truſt in him, Pſal. xxxvii. 5. whether it be in the matter of their ſouls, or bodies, of the things of this life, or of that which is to come. GOD freeth them from all *carefulneſs*, and would that they ſhould free themſelves from it too.

God would have you uſe all good *means* for this life, but *without taking thought for to-morrow* about *what you ſhall eat, what you ſhall drink, what you ſhall put on*, Mat. vi. 25, 28, 31, 34. or what ſhall become of you and yours another day. He would not have you to be ſo diſtruſtful of him, as to take care of *futurity*, Luke xii. 22, 29. the care of *ſucceſs* from him upon yourſelf, perplexing your heart with *doubt* and fear till you find it. But his will is, that when you have done what you can, with a chearful and ready mind, Pſal. lv. 22. that you ſhould leave the whole matter of good, or ill ſucceſs to *his care*, 1 Pet. v. 7.

In like manner, *GOD would have you to uſe means to ſave your ſoul:* but when you have ſo done, and continue ſo to do; he would have you *care* no further. He would not have you to doubt and fear that all ſhall be in *vain*, and to

no

no purpoſe, Pſal. lxxiii. 13. or that you ſhall *not be ſaved* notwithſtanding. He would not that you ſhould diſcourage and enfeeble your heart *by taking thought* about the iſſue of any trials and temptations that may befall you *before* they do come, Mat. xi. 19 Mat. xxiv. 6. for that is *vain*; nor yet *when* they do come, for that is *needleſs*.

In ſuch caſes you need only to ſerve GOD's providence in the uſe of the *preſent means* of Salvation, gaining as much grace and ſtrength as you can againſt ſuch times, improving that grace and ſtrength which you have in ſuch times of trial: but touching *ſucceſs*, either how much grace and comfort you ſhall have, or when you ſhall have it, and whether you ſhall hold out in the time of trial, or be ſaved in the end; you muſt not indulge doubtful and diſtruſtful cares; but muſt *truſt God* with theſe things alſo.

For our *Savior* prohibiteth *his Diſciples all trouble*, John xiv. 1. 27. that might ariſe *through fear of ill ſucceſs* in their Chriſtian courſe. And St. *Paul* eaſeth himſelf of this trouble and fear, committing his ſoul, and the iſſue of all his trials unto GOD, (ſaying, *I know whom I have truſted, and I am aſſured that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him againſt that day,*) 2 Tim. i. 12. 2 Tim. iv. 6, 8, 18. He is confident in GOD for *good ſucceſs* in his whole Chriſtian *warfare*; ſo ſhould you.

§. IV.

§. IV. *Reaſons againſt anxious care, and for quiet Truſt in GOD.*

NOW to diſſwade you from all *carefulneſs*, and to perſwade you to *reſt ſecure* in GOD, concerning the particular events of all actions, and touching the final event and good ſucceſs of your Chriſtian profeſſion; conſider theſe reaſons, (1.) Shewing, why you ſhould not *care eagerly and inordinately* for earthly things; (2.) Why you ſhould not *take* doubtful or diſtruſtful *thought* about any thing, whether earthly, or heavenly.

Firſt, Seriouſly conſider, that *all earthly things are of little worth, very fading*, and tranſitory, 1 John ii. 17. likened when they are at beſt, to the *flower of graſs*, Iſa. xl. 6. James i. 10, 11. Wherefore they cannot be *worthy* of your anxious thought, or careful perplexity about them. It is extream folly for man, being endued with reaſon, to ſet his mind upon that, which is *little* or *nothing worth*, nay, which (as *Solomon* calleth riches) *is not*, Prov. xxiii. 5. which is but of *ſhort* continuance, and only for *bodily* uſe, while he hath it: which alſo is given, by GOD, unto the wicked, even to his enemies, rather than unto the godly, Pſal. xvii. 13, 14.

Secondly, *Inordinate care of earthly things is exceeding hurtful:* For beſides that it breedeth many *fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in perdition*, 1 Tim. vi. 9. it doth hinder the care of things *ſpiritual* and *heavenly*. It cauſeth perſons

ſons either *not to come at all* to the means of Salvation, Mat. xxii. 5. Luke xiv. 18, &c. or if they come to the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, good company, and good conference, to *depart without ſpiritual profit*, Mat. xiii. 22. Eze. xxxiii. 31. It will cauſe a man to *err from the faith*, 1 Tim. vi. 10. and to be altogether *unfit for death*, and unprepared for his latter end. For when any one part draweth more nouriſhment to itſelf than it *ought*, ſome other parts muſt needs be *hindred* in their growth; and when the ſtrength of the ground is ſpent in nouriſhing weeds, tares, or corn of little worth, the good wheat is obſtructed in its growth, choaked, or ſtarved, Phil. iii. 12. "He whoſe *cares are too* "*much about the earth*, his *care will be too little* "*about the things of heaven.*"

Thirdly, Next, conſider the *reaſons*, why you muſt not indulge *any anxious care* about ſucceſs in your lawful endeavours, any more than by Prayer to commend them to GOD.

Firſt, becauſe it is to *uſurp upon God's peculiar right, God's divine prerogative*, taking his ſole and proper work out of his hands; for *care of ſucceſs*, 1 Pet. v. 7. and of what ſhall be hereafter, is proper to GOD.

Secondly, *It is a vain and fruitleſs thing* (when you have diligently uſed lawful means for any thing) *to take thought for ſucceſs*, Pſal. cxxvii. 2. For *who can by taking thought add any thing to his ſtature?* Luke xii. 25, 26. or make one hair white or black? Mat. vi. 36. Underſtand the ſame of all other things.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Every day bringeth its full employment with it, together with its croſſes and griefs*, Mat. vi. 34. ſo that you will have full work enough for your care, to endeavour to do the *preſent* days work *holily*; and to bear each *preſent* days affliction *fruitfully*, and *patiently*; you have little reaſon therefore to perplex your heart with taking thought of *future* events, or of what ſhall be *to-morrow*.

Fourthly, *It is altogether needleſs to take thought about the ſucceſs of your actions*, for *ſucceſs is cared for already by God*, Mat. vi. 26, 30, 32. One whoſe *care* is of more *uſe* and conſequence than yours can be. You are cared for by one, who *loveth* you better than you can love yourſelf, who is wiſe and knoweth what is *beſt* for you, and what you moſt need, better than yourſelf; who is always *preſent* with you, and is both *able* and ready *to do exceeding abundantly* for you, Eph. iii. 20. *above all that you can aſk or think:* even *God*, who careth for meaner creatures than you are, who alſo is *your GOD*, *your heavenly Father*, of whoſe care you have had happy experience, who in times paſt cared for you when you could not care for yourſelf, *who hath kept you* in, and *from your mother's belly*, *who*, (if you are believers indeed) *ordained you to Salvation* before you had a being, Eph. i. 4. Who in due time *gave his only begotten Son for you, and to you*, Rom. viii. 32. as appeareth in that now he hath given you faith and hope in him, and love to him. It is your GOD and Father who hath *commanded, that*

for

the preſent, and for the future, *you ſhould caſt your care and burthen on him*, 1 Pet. v. 7. Pſal. lv. 22. having made many gracious promiſes, that *he will care for you*, Pſal. xxxvii. 5. that he will ſuſtain you, and that he will *bring your deſire to paſs*. What wiſe man then will encumber himſelf with *needleſs* cares?

Fifthly, *Carefulneſs or anxious thoughts about ſucceſs, proceedeth from baſe and curſed cauſes*; namely, from *ignorance* of *God*, and from *unbelief* and *diſtruſt* of GOD in whomſoever this ſin reigneth; hence it was that the *Heathen* abounded in this ſin, Mat. vi. 32. And by how much this *Carefulneſs* is indulged by any (though it reign not) by ſo much he may be ſaid to be of little ſound knowledge, and of *little faith*, Mat. vi. 30.

Sixthly, *Carefulneſs*, and *doubtful ſuſpence* about ſucceſs in your lawful endeavours, (be it whether you or yours ſhall *proſper*, or whether you ſhall *profit* by the means of grace, or whether you ſhall be *ſaved* in the end) *doth produce many dangerous and miſchievous effects.*

Firſt, *It will cauſe you to neglect the proper uſe of the means of this life, or of that which is to come*, 2 Kings vi. 33. according as you doubt of ſucceſs in either, or if you neglect them not utterly, yet you will have *no heart* to go about them. For as thoſe that needleſly intermeddle with other perſons buſineſs, uſually neglect their own, ſo you will be apt to leave your *own work* undone, when you take *God's work* out of his hands;

hands; and who is he that will take pains about that which he feareth will be to no purpoſe, or labour loſt?

Secondly, *you will be ready to uſe unlawful means for any thing* when you doubt of ſucceſs from lawful, Gen. xii. 11, 12, 13. Gen. xvi. 2. Gen. xxvii. 5, 19.

Thirdly, *Taking thought doth divide, diſtract, over load,* and *conſume the heart and ſpirits, nothing more.*

Fourthly, *You can never be thankful to* GOD *for any thing whereof you fear that you ſhall have no good ſucceſs.*

Fifthly, *This anxious thought* and *diſtreſſing fear* about ſucceſs, *will deprive you of the comfort of all thoſe good things you have had, and which now you do enjoy.*

Sixthly, *Nothing will bring ill ſucceſs upon you ſooner than unbelieving and diſtruſtful fears about futurity.* For when any perſon ſhall (notwithſtanding the experience he hath had, or might have had of GOD's power, love, care, and truth of his promiſes) yet *diſtruſtfully care* ſo far, as not to content himſelf with his own work, ſo far as *prudent care* leadeth him; but alſo will take *God's work,* and the *burthen of his work upon himſelf,* caring about ſucceſs, which only belongeth *to God,* and which *God* only can do, and bear; this folly and preſumption doth ſo much provoke *God,* that it cauſeth him out of his wiſe Juſtice to ceaſe caring for ſuch a one, *leaving him to his own care,* and to his wit, friends, or

any

any other earthly help, to make him by woful experience ſee and feel, how little any, or all theſe, without *GOD* can avail him. Nay, it cauſeth *God* not only to withdraw his own help, but the help of *all things* whereon ſuch a man doth rely; and which is more, cauſeth them inſtead of being for him, to be utterly *againſt* him. Is it not juſt with GOD, that whoſoever will not be beholden to GOD to bear their burthen, but will take it up and bear it themſelves, ſhould be made to bear it *alone*, to the diſtreſs and diſquietment of their own hearts?

Wherefore all theſe things conſidered, I return to the exhortation, or concluſion before propoſed, *viz. Commit thy ways unto the Lord, and truſt in him. Caſt all your care on God, be careful in nothing*, Pſal. lv. 22.

Oh! How *happy are we Chriſtians* if we did but *know*, or knowing *would enjoy our happineſs*. We are *cared for* in every thing, that we need, and that can be good for us; we may live without taking thought, or care in any thing. Our work is only to ſtudy and endeavour to pleaſe *God*, walking before him in ſincerity, and with a perfect heart; then *we may cleave to him, and reſt on him both for our bodies and ſouls without fear or diſtraction*, 1 Cor. vii. 35. GOD is *All-ſufficient*, and all in all to ſuch, he is known by his *name Jehovah* to ſuch, Exod. vi. 3. even to be the *being*, and the accompliſher of his promiſes to them. If we ſhall wiſely and diligently care to do our *work*, we, ſerving ſo good and ſo able a maſter,

a maſter, need not take thought about *our wages*. If we would make it our care to obey and pleaſe ſo good, and ſo rich, and bountiful a *Father*; we need not be *careful* for our *maintenance* here, in our *minority and non-age*; nor yet for our *eternal inheritance*, when we ſhall come to *full age*. We in this *holy ſecurity* and freedom from *Carefulneſs* (if we were not wanting to ourſelves) might live in *an heaven upon earth*; and that not only when we have means (for even then our ſecurity is in *God*, not in the means) but when to the eye of fleſh we have *no* means: For GOD is *above*, and *more than* all means.

§. V. *Means to attain quieting Confidence in* GOD, *and freedom from perplexing Cares.*

THAT you may leave anxious caring, and be brought to caſt all your care on GOD.

(1.) *Deny yourſelf and your own wiſdom*, Prov. xxiii. 4. be not wiſe in your own conceit, nor preſumptuous of your wit, ſkill, or means.

(2.) *Get ſound knowledge, faith, hope, and confidence in God*, Rom. viii. 32. *live by faith, for the preſervation both of body and ſoul*, Heb. x. 38, 39. Get not only faith in *his promiſe*; but *in his providence* alſo. When you ſhall ſee no way or means of gaining the good you *deſire*, or of keeping you from the evil which you *fear*, or of delivering you from the evil you *feel*, then call to mind, not only the promiſes of GOD, *viz. I am with you*, Joſ. i. 5. *I will not leave nor forſake you*,

you, Heb. xiii. 5. and *all things work together for good*, Rom. viii. 28. and many ſuch like; but believe alſo that *God will provide* means to bring to paſs what he hath promiſed, though yet you ſee not how. When you can ſay with faithful *Abraham*, *God will provide*, Gen. xxii. 8. it will caſt out fear and doubt. But if (with *Abraham*) Gen. xii. 11. ch. xvi. 2. you believe GOD's *promiſes in the main*, but not *God's providence in the means*; you will then be tempted to *ſeek out, and uſe unlawful means to obtain the thing promiſed, as he did*; or faint in waiting as many others have done. For we ſee the like in *David*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 10, 11. when he had *faith in God's providence*, he could ſay of *Saul*; *The Lord ſhall ſmite him, or his day ſhall come to die, or he ſhall deſcend into the battle and periſh. The* LORD *forbid that I ſhould ſtretch forth my hand againſt the Lord's anointed.* But when he *doubted of God's providence*, then he ſaith, *I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of Saul*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1.

(3.) *Give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure*; for when you know aſſuredly *that* GOD *is your heavenly Father*, and Chriſt Jeſus your Redeemer, and that you are of *his family*, having your name *written in heaven*, you then will eaſily free your *heart from being troubled* with fear and carking care, John xiv. 1, 2. being ſure that your *heavenly Father and Savior doth* and *will* provide for you.

(4.) Laſtly, *you muſt often renew your acts of faith on* GOD, his promiſes and providence, caſting

caſting all your care on Him. Making your requeſts known to GOD by prayer, and ſupplication for what you would have; being heartily thankful for what you have had, now have, and hope to have hereafter. Then *the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding*, Phil. iv. 6, 7. ſhall keep your heart and mind from vexing thoughts, and heart-diſtreſſing fears, and that, in and through Chriſt Jeſus, of which *peace* I intend next to ſpeak.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Peace with GOD.

§. I. *The Nature and Excellency of Peace with GOD.*

THAT you may be perſwaded to *walk before GOD* in uprightneſs, in all well-pleaſing, and to live without taking anxious thought about any thing, caſting your care on GOD according to the former directions: GOD hath aſſured you that *peace ſhall be upon you*, Gal. vi. 16. Phil. iv. 6, 7. even that *peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, which ſhall keep your heart and mind through Chriſt Jeſus*, if you thus do.

Peace and quiet is moſt deſireable. All things that have motion deſire it as their perfection; bodily things enjoy it *by their reſt in their places*: reaſonable things enjoy this peace *in the quiet of their mind and heart, when they have their deſires ſatisfied*,

ſatisfied, being freed from ſuch oppoſition as might diſquiet them.

Peace is a true agreement and concord between perſons or things, whereby not only all *enmity* is laid aſide, and all *injuries* are forborne; but all *amity* is entred into, and all readineſs of *communicating*, and *doing good* to each other is ſhewed.

Natural peace is of great price, and very much to be deſired, for the exceeding great *benefit* which it bringeth to the body, family, and ſtate. But the *peace* of which I am to ſpeak, (which is promiſed to all which walk with GOD according to the *rule* of faith, and of the *new creature*, *Gal.* vi. 15, 16. caſting their care on GOD) exceedeth all other peace, as far as the *ſoul*, *heaven*, and *eternity* exceedeth the *body*, the *earth*, and a *moment* of time. Which will eaſily appear, if you ſhall obſerve by what *motives* and *arguments* the Holy Ghoſt doth commend, and ſet this forth unto you, *Phil.* iv. 7. It hath its commendation above above all other peace in *three* reſpects.

Firſt, In reſpect of the *excellency of the perſon*, with whom and from whom it is, *namely*, *God*; therefore it is called *peace of God*, Phil. iv. 7. It is ſo called, (1.) Becauſe it hath *God for its object*; it is a peace with *God*. (2.) Becauſe *God by his Spirit is the* author of it; it is peace from GOD, a peace which *God giveth*, John xiv. 27. ſuch a peace which the *world neither can, nor will give.*

Secondly,

Secondly, this peace is commended in reſpect of the unſpeakable, and inconceivable *goodneſs* and *worth* that is in it; *It paſſeth all underſtanding*; and this it doth, not only becauſe unſanctified men are meer ſtrangers to it, and underſtand it not: but becauſe regenerate men, to whom it belonged, and in whom it is, even they (when GOD giveth them any lively feeling of it) find it to be ſuch a peace as they could *not imagine* it to be before they felt it. For they cannot ſo diſtinctly, and fully conceive the tranſcendent excellency of it, as by any means fitly to deſcribe it. It rather taketh up the mind into an holy rapture, unto admiration of what it feeth, and of what it perceiveth is yet to be known, than poſſibly can be diſtinctly and fully comprehended or expreſſed by mind or tongue. It is with them that feel it in any ſpecial degree, as it was with the *Queen of the South*, when ſhe ſaw *Solomon's wiſdom*. 1 Kings x. 4, 5, 6, 7. She had a great opinion of *Solomon's wiſdom*, by what ſhe had heard; but when ſhe ſaw it, ſhe was ſtricken with ſuch admiration, that it is ſaid *ſhe had no more ſpirit in her*; his wiſdom was ſo much beyond her expectation, that ſhe breaketh out into words of admiration, ſaying, *the half was not told her of Solomon's wiſdom, it exceeded the fame thereof*; So doth the *peace* of GOD. It being like the *dimenſions of the love of Chriſt*, Eph. iii. 18, 19. (the root thereof) and like the raviſhing *joy of Chriſtians* (the fruit thereof) ſurpaſſing all full, ana diſtinct knowledge, and all

means of full and clear expreſſion; being as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith *unſpeakable*, 1 Pet. i. 8. This *peace* is included amongſt thoſe other graces and gifts accompanying the *Goſpel*, which are ſuch as *eye hath not ſeen*, 1 Cor. ii. 10. nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man, ſo as clearly to perceive them, or fully to expreſs them.

Thirdly, This peace is commended in reſpect of the *excellent effect* thereof, which is a proof that it paſſeth underſtanding, namely, *it keepeth the heart and mind, in and through Chriſt Jeſus.*

This is an excellent and moſt uſeful effect on mans behalf; For it ſupplieth the place, and office of a *Caſtle or ſtrong Garriſon*, 2 Cor. xi. 32. (as the original ſignifieth) to keep the principal *Forts of the ſoul* from being ſurpriſed, or annoyed, either by invaſion from without, or by inſurrection from within.

The parts of man, which are kept by this *peace* of GOD, are the *heart*, and *mind*; by *heart* is meant the will and affections; by *mind*, the power of thinking and underſtanding. For *true peace of GOD* doth fill the *heart* with ſuch Joy, Patience, Hope, and Comfort in believing, that it keepeth it from heart-vexing grief, fear, diſtruſt, and deſpair. It likewiſe filleth the *mind* ſo full of apprehenſion of GOD's favour, fidelity, and love, that it maketh it reſt *ſecure* in GOD, and delivereth it from diſtreſs of mind, or anxious Cares about any thing; keeping out the

the dominion of all perplexing and diſtruſtful thoughts.

The *ſtrength* which this peace hath, whereby it keepeth the heart and mind as with a Garriſon, is impregnable. It is derived from *Chriſt*, it hath it in and from *Chriſt:* The Text ſaith, *through Chriſt*, that is, through the power of *Chriſt's Spirit.* For as we are kept by *Faith*, (from which this peace ſpringeth) *as in a ſtrong Garriſon*, 1 Pet. i. 5. by the power of God to Salvation: ſo, by the ſame power of Chriſt, our *hearts and minds* are kept by *the peace of God, as with a Garriſon*, from diſcouraging, diſtracting, and uncomfortable thoughts. For what is this *peace* elſe but a beam from the *object* of our Faith, proceeding from the love of God to us-ward, and the *fruit* of Faith, as we feel it wrought in us by God.

The *peace* of God is two-fold, or one and the ſame in different degrees.

The firſt is an *actual entring into, and mutual embracing of Peace between GOD and man.*

The ſecond is the *Manifeſtation and Expreſſion of this Peace.*

The firſt is *when God and man are made friends*; which is, when God is *pacified* towards Man, and when man is *reconciled* unto God, ſo that now God ſtandeth *well affected* towards men, and man hath put off *Enmities* againſt God; which mutual Atonement and Friendſhip, *Chriſt Jeſus the only Mediator betwixt God and man*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. hath by his ſatisfaction and inter-

ceſſion *wrought* for man, and by his *Spirit applieth* unto, and worketh in man. For until this Atonement be applied, GOD, in his juſt Judgment and holy diſpleaſure, *is an Enemy unto man* for ſin, Pſal. v. 5. Rom. v. 10. and man in his *evil mind*, and unjuſt Hatred, *is an Enemy unto GOD*, Col. i. 21. and unto all goodneſs through ſin.

This firſt Peace, *is Peace of God with man* inherent in GOD, working the like diſpoſition of Peace in man towards GOD; and is the fountain from which the ſecond floweth.

The ſecond kind (or rather further degree) of Peace of GOD, is the *operation and manifeſtation of the former Peace*, which is a *peace of God in man wrought by the Spirit of God, through the apprehenſion that God is at peace with him.*

This Peace is partly and moſt ſenſibly in the *Conſcience*, which is called Peace of Conſcience, and may alſo be called *peace of Juſtification*, according to that; *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God*, &c. And it is partly in the *whole reaſonable man*, whereby the will and affections of the ſoul agree within *themſelves*, and are *ſubject* to the enlightned mind, conſpiring all of them againſt the common adverſaries of GOD and the ſoul, *i. e.* the fleſh, and the devil; this may be called *peace of Sanctification*; according to that of the *Apoſtle*, Rom. vi. 22. *Being made free from ſin, and became ſervants of God, you have your fruit unto holineſs.* This is the agreement of all the members to become ſervants to righteouſ-

neſs

neſs unto *Holineſs*, Rom. vi. 19. Not but there will be *warring* always in our members, but it is not the warring ſo much of *one Member againſt another*, as the warring of the *Fleſh* in every member *againſt the Spirit*, which Spirit alſo warreth againſt the fleſh. This *conflict* between the fleſh and the ſpirit beginning in man, as ſoon as the Spirit hath wrought the *peace of Holineſs*, in ſetting the ſoul in order.

Moreover, this *peace of Sanctification* conſiſteth in this, that although a Chriſtian muſt never be, nor ever is *at peace* with ſin, ſo that it doth not aſſault and moleſt him, or that he ſhould ſubject himſelf *to it*, or have it abſolutely ſubject *to him* in this life, yet he hath a peace and quiet (in compariſon) from ſin, in as much as he is freed from the *dominion* and power of ſin, Rom. vi. 14, 22. to condemn him, or to reduce him to his former bondage unto ſin: Now, ſo far as a man getteth a *conqueſt* over his luſts, that they are kept under, and forbear to aſſault and moleſt him, ſo far he may be ſaid to have this *peace* of Sanctification.

The *Conſcience* when it is awakened in the Act of accuſing, and condemning man for *ſome*, doth withal *Prick*, Acts ii. 37. Prov. xxviii. 14. Sting, and Wound the heart with unutterable and unconceivable griefs, fears, and terrors, through the apprehenſion of GOD's infinite, eternal and juſt Wrath for ſin.

Now, *when* GOD *by his Spirit*, Rom. v. 1, 5. giveth any true hope and aſſurance unto a man

that his Juſtice is ſatisfied concerning him *through Chriſt*, and that now all Enmity and Wrath is done away on GOD's part; and that he loveth him in Chriſt with a *free*, *full*, and *everlaſting Love*, Rom. viii. 16. hereby he *ſpeaketh peace to the Conſcience*, having done away all the guilt of ſin which before moleſted it, through ſenſe of GOD's anger, and fear of puniſhment. Hence ariſeth *peace and comfort in the Conſcience*, which therefore is called *Peace of Conſcience*. Thus the mind ceaſeth to be perplexed, and, by faith in Chriſt's death, through the Spirit, becometh *quiet* with an heavenly Tranquility, reſting on the Word of Promiſe, and according to the meaſure of clear apprehenſion of GOD's love in Chriſt, in the ſame meaſure is at ſweet agreement within itſelf, without *fear or trouble*, John xiv. 27. and in the ſame meaſure he hath *Peace* of Conſcience, flowing from the Aſſurance of Juſtification.

As ſoon alſo as a man *beginneth actually to be at Peace with God*, his luſts do *begin to be at War with him*, rebelling againſt the *law of his mind*, which yet by little and little ſhall be ſubdued and conquered; which conqueſt though it is imperfect in this life; yet by virtue of the *peace* now made with GOD, if he will improve it by ſeeking help of GOD, and taking to him the *compleat Armour*, fighting manfully under Chriſt's banner, Eph. vi. 10. he may ſo prevail againſt them, that they do not ſo *often*, nor ſo *ſtrongly* aſſault him as in former times. Now ſo far as the

the powers and faculties of man *agree* in their fight againſt ſin, and *ſubdue* it, that it doth not aſſault and moleſt him, he may be ſaid to have *the Peace of Sanctification.*

The *firſt Peace* whereby GOD is pacified, and is become propitious and gracious to man, *is abſolutely neceſſary to the very being of a Chriſtian.*

The *ſecond*, which riſeth from the *manifeſtation* of this Peace unto a man, and the ſenſible feeling of the operation of this Peace in man, is not neceſſary to the being of a Chriſtian (at leaſt in a ſenſible degree of it) but *to the well-being of a Chriſtian it is neceſſary.* For a man may be in the favour of GOD, and yet be without the *ſenſe* of this Peace in himſelf: Becauſe this *Peace of Conſcience* doth not flow neceſſarily from the *being in GOD's favour*, but from *knowledge and aſſurance* of being in his favour.

Now a man in many caſes may *looſe* for a time his ſenſe of GOD's favour, his faith being over clouded with fears and unbelief, as it was with *David*, after his adultery, &c. Pſal. li. 11, 12. who yet was upheld *ſecretly by his right hand (as the Pſalmiſt was in another caſe)* by virtue of that firſt *Peace of God*, Pſal. lxxiii. 23. yet, until GOD gave him the ſenſe and feeling of His *loving Countenance*, he could not enjoy the comfort of it; yea, though GOD by *Nathan* in the outward Miniſtry of his Word had given him aſſurance of GOD's *loving kindneſs*, (ſaying) *The LORD hath put away thy ſin*, thou ſhalt not die, 2 Sam. xii. 13.

That *firſt Peace is abſolute*, and admitteth of no degrees.

The *ſecond*, which floweth thence, both in reſpect of Peace of Conſcience, and in reſpect of good agreement of the powers and faculties of man within themſelves, and of freedom from aſſaults and moleſtations either of Satan from without, or from luſts within, *is not abſolute*; *but admitteth of ſeveral degrees.* In the life to come this latter Peace ſhall be perfect: for then all believers ſhall be perfectly freed from all trouble of Conſcience, and from all moleſtation by temptations; their victory ſhall be compleat. But in this life their Peace is but imperfect; it is true for *Subſtance*, but is *more or leſs*, as the light they have received is *more clear*, *or dim*; and as grace in them is *more ſtrong*, or *more weak*.

For although man's *Juſtification is abſolute*, and admitteth not of degrees, yet the *aſſurance* of it, whereby a man hath Peace of Conſcience, *is more*, *or leſs*, according to the meaſure of his clear ſight of Chriſt's love, and evidence of his faith. Hence it is that the dear Children of GOD have *interruptions* and *intermiſſions* in their Peace; having ſometimes much peace, ſometimes little or no peace; according as they have intermiſſions in their aſſurance of GOD's favour.

Thus it was with *David* and *Aſaph*, ſometimes *his heart was quiet*, and *his ſpirit was glad*, *in aſſurance that his ſoul ſhould reſt in Hope*, Pſal. xvi. 9. at other times *his ſoul was caſt down and diſquieted in him*, Pſal. xlii. 11. thinking that he

was

was *caſt out of God's ſight*, Pſal. xxxi. 22. fearing that GOD *would ſhew no more favour*, Pſal. lxxvii. 7. Yea, he was ſo perplexed that he did *almoſt faint, and his eyes failed with waiting for God*, Pſal. lxix. 3. For ſince the *beſt aſſurance* of believers is exerciſed with combating againſt doubting, their trueſt and *beſt peace* muſt needs be aſſaulted with diſquiet. And as it is with a Ship at Anchor, ſo is the moſt ſtable Peace of a Chriſtian in this life, who hath his *Hope as an Anchor of his ſoul ſure and ſtedfaſt*, Heb. vi. 19. who, though he cannot make utter *Shipwrack*, yet he may be grievouſly *toſſed* and *affrighted* with the waves and billows of manifold temptations and fears. Likewiſe though *Peace of Sanctification be true*, yet it muſt needs be *more or leſs* according as any man groweth or decreaſeth in *holineſs*, and as GOD ſhall pleaſe to reſtrain his ſpiritual enemies, or give power to ſubdue them, more or leſs.

Now the *Peace of God*, both in him to man, and from him manifeſted and wrought in man, *doth paſs all underſtanding*, and ſerveth to keep the *heart and mind* of him that walketh with GOD, and reſteth on him *through Chriſt*.

This *Peace* it is which you muſt ſeek for, and embrace in *believing*, and if you would have true comfort and tranquillity in your mind, labour eſpecially to get and keep the *Peace of a good Conſcience*, which ſeemeth to be the Peace that is chiefly, though not only, intended in this Text.

§. II. *Farther Excellencies of the Peace of God.*

THAT you may be induced with all diligence and earneſtneſs to ſeek after this bleſſed *Peace*, and may better perceive that this Peace of GOD for *worth* and *uſe* paſſeth all underſtanding. Take theſe reaſons in particular.

Firſt, *That muſt needs be an excellent Peace which GOD will pleaſe to take into his holy Title*, calling himſelf *the God of Peace*, Heb. xiii. 20. calling *Chriſt the Prince of Peace*, Iſa. ix. 6.

Secondly, *That Peace muſt needs be of infinite value, paſſing all underſtanding, for which Chriſt gave himſelf*, paying the price of his own moſt *precious blood* for it, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

Thirdly, *This Peace cannot but paſs all Underſtanding, becauſe* the cauſe from whence it cometh, namely, *Chriſt's love*, Eph. iii. 18, 19. and the effect which it worketh, namely, *joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Pet. i. 8. do as the *Apoſtles* affirm, *paſs knowledge, and are unſpeakable.*

Fourthly, *This Peace was that firſt congratulation*, Luke ii. 10, 11, 14. wherewith the holy Angels ſaluted the Church at Chriſt's birth, giving her joy in her new born Huſband, and Saviour. And it was that *ſpecial legacy* which *Chriſt Jeſus* did bequeath to his *Church*, John xiv. 27. leaving that as the *beſt token* of his love to it, a little before his death: Saying, *My Peace I leave with you.*

Fifthly, *This Peace is one of the principal parts of*

of the Kingdom of GOD, which conſiſteth, as the Apoſtle ſaith, of Righteouſneſs, *Peace*, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, Rom. xiv. 17.

Sixthly, *By as much as the evils and miſchiefs* that come to a man by having GOD to be his *enemy*, which draweth upon him GOD's Wrath, Juſtice, Power, and all GOD's Creatures to be againſt him: And *by as much as the grievous, and intollerable anguiſh of a wounded Spirit paſſeth Underſtanding; by ſo much the Peace of GOD, which freeth him from all theſe, muſt of neceſſity, paſs all Underſtanding*, Prov. xviii. 14.

Now that it is a fearful thing to have GOD to be an *Enemy*, it is ſaid, *He is a conſuming fire*, Heb. xii. 29. and *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. x. 31. It appears likewiſe by *Chriſt's Compaſſion* and Grief for *Jeruſalem*, who neglected the time of making and accepting of peace with GOD; for he *wept* over it and ſaid, Luke xix. 41, 42. if thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong to thy *Peace*; but now they are hid from thine eyes. But what it is to have GOD to be an *Enemy* is ſeen moſt fully by *Chriſt's trouble and grief in his Paſſion and Agony in the Garden, and in the Extremity of his conflict with God's wrath on the Croſs*, when GOD ſhewed himſelf to be an *Enemy*, and did for man's ſin pour on him the fierceneſs of his wrath. It made him, though he was GOD, being man, to ſweat for very anguiſh, *as it were drops of blood*, Luke xxii. 44. and to cry, *If it be poſſible let this*

cup

cup paſs, Mat. xxvi. 39. and *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Mat. xxvii. 46.

Moreover; If you do obſerve the complaints of ſuch diſtreſſed ſouls that have had *terror of Conſcience*, (if you have not had experience thereof in yourſelf,) how that they were at their wits end, *pricked at heart*, as it were with the point of a ſpear, or ſting of a ſerpent, Acts ii. 37. pained like men whoſe *bones are broken and out of joint*, Pſal. li. 8. making them to *roar, and to conſume their ſpirits for very heavineſs*, Pſal. xxxii. 3. then you will ſay that *Peace of Conſcience doth paſs all Underſtanding.*

Seventhly, *When God and a man's own Conſcience is for him*, and *God's* grace in ſome good meaſure, hath ſubdued *ſin* and *Satan* in him, *this bringeth with it aſſurance that all other things (whoſe peace are worth having,) are alſo at peace with him*, Hoſ. ii. 18, 19, 20. For *if God be for us, who can be againſt us*, Rom. viii. 31, 32. This peace muſt of neceſſity bring with it all things which will make us happy, even all things which pertain to *life, godlineſs*, and glory, 2 Pet. i. 3.

Laſtly, Conſider this, that as the worth and ſenſe of Peace of God is unutterable, and unconceivable, ſo *the time of it is indeterminable, it is everlaſting*, Iſa. ix. 7. and hath no end. Compare this with the former, and it cannot be denyed, but that *the Peace of God doth every way paſs underſtanding.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Concerning the Impediments to Peace; falſe Hopes, and falſe Fears.

§. I. IF you would enjoy this happy *Peace*, you muſt firſt remove and avoid the *impediments*. Secondly, you muſt uſe all helps and *furtherances* which ſerve to procure and keep it.

I reduce the *impediments* unto two heads.

Firſt, A *falſe opinion and hope that all is well with a man*, and that all ſhall be well with him with Reſpect of his Salvation, *when yet indeed God is not reconciled to him*. Hence will follow a quietneſs of heart, ſomewhat like to *Peace of Conſcience*, which yet is but a *falſe peace*.

Secondly, *Cauſeleſs doubting, and falſe fear that a man's eſtate* with reſpect to his ſalvation *is not good; although God be indeed at peace with him*; hence followeth trouble and anguiſh of heart, ſome-what like unto that of *helliſh deſpair*, diſturbing his *true peace*.

Either of theſe do *hinder* peace.

The *firſt* hindereth the *having*,

The *ſecond* hindereth the *feeling and comfortable enjoying of peace*.

It hath been an old device of *Satan* when he would keep any man from that which is *true*, to obtrude upon him that which ſhall ſeem to be true, but is *falſe*. Thus he did in the firſt *call-*

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ing of the Jews, Mat. xxiv. 5. When he ſaw they had an expectation of the *true Chriſt*, he, to divert and ſeduce them from the true Chriſt, ſetteth up *falſe Chriſts*. Even ſo in the matter of peace: If he can ſo delude men that they ſhall content themſelves with a *falſe Peace*, he knoweth that they will never ſeek for that which is *true*. It is a common practice with the *Devil* to endeavour to make all that are not in a ſtate of grace, to *preſume* that they are.

Alſo ſuch is his cunning and malice, that when any man *is in* the ſtate of grace, he will labour by all means to *diſtreſs* and *perplex* the ſoul with unreaſonable fears and ſuſpicions, to make that eſtate doubtful and diſcomfortable, to *vex* and to weary him, if he cannot drive him to *deſpair*, 2 Cor. ii. 7, 11. Now the *Heart* of man, ſo far as it is *unſanctified*, being *deceitful above all things*, Jer. xvii. 9. is moſt apt to yield to *Satan* in both theſe caſes. Whence it is that there are very many which boaſt of *much* peace, and yet have none of it. And many fear they have *no* peace who yet have much of it.

Wherefore the Rule is, "Believe not either "your *deceitful heart*, or the *Devil*, when they "tell you either that you are in a ſtate of Sal-"vation, or in a ſtate of Damnation: But be-"lieve the *Scripture* what it ſaith in either."

You may know when theſe perſwaſions come from your *deceitful heart*, or from the *Devil*, thus,

Firſt,

Firſt, If the means to perſwade you to either be from *falſe* grounds, or from *miſ-application* of true grounds.

Secondly, If the *concluſions*, inferred from either perſwaſion, be to keep you in a *ſinful courſe*, and to keep you, or to drive you from GOD, as if you *need not* be ſo ſtrict in godlineſs, or that now it is *in vain*, or *too late* to turn and ſeek unto GOD; then it is from Satan and from a deceitful heart, and you muſt not believe them. But if theſe perſwaſions be from a right application of true grounds, and do produce theſe good effects, to drive you to GOD, in praiſe or prayer, and unto a care to pleaſe GOD, they are from his gracious Spirit.

§. II. *The Cauſes of Preſumption, or falſe Peace.*

THE *falſe Peace* and evil quiet of Conſcience, doth ariſe from theſe three cauſes.

Firſt, From *groſs ignorance of the danger wherein a man liveth becauſe of ſin*, Eph. iv. 18, 19. whence followeth a *blind Conſcience.*

Secondly, from *groundleſs ſecurity and preſumption that all ſhall be well with him, notwithſtanding that he knoweth he hath ſinned*, Deut. xxix. 19. and knoweth that ſin is damnable; whence he hath a *deluded Conſcience.*

Thirdly, From *obſtinancy, through delight and cuſtom in ſin*, Jer. xliv. 16, 17. whence cometh hardneſs and inſenſibility of heart, which is a *ſeared Conſcience.*

Whereſoever

Whereſoever any of theſe evils reign, altho' *God* hath ſaid *there is no peace to the wicked*, Iſa. lvii. 21. that is, no true peace, yet ſuch fear no evil; *but promiſe to themſelves peace and ſafety*, 1 Theſ. v. 3. like thoſe of whom the *Prophet* ſpake, who had *made a covenant with death, and with hell were at an agreement*, Iſa. xxviii. 15. Yea, though they hear all the Curſes againſt Sinners, which are in GOD's book denounced againſt them; yet will they *bleſs themſelves in their heart, and ſay, they ſhall have peace, though they walk in the ſtubbornneſs of their hearts*, Deut. xxix. 19. But whoſoever is thus *quiet* in himſelf through a falſe peace, it is a ſign that the *ſtrong man keepeth the houſe*, Luke xi. 21. and that, he (continuing in his fools paradiſe) is not far from *ſudden and fearful deſtruction from the Almighty*, 1 Theſ. v. 3. Deut. xxix. 20.

Whoſoever therefore would have *true* peace of GOD, muſt beware of theſe *three* impediments.

Firſt, He muſt know and be thoroughly convinced that *by nature*, by reaſon of *Adam*'s firſt tranſgreſſion which is juſtly imputed to him, Rom. v. 12. and becauſe of his *own inherent wickedneſs of heart and life*, Rom. vii. 18. Pſal. li. 3, 5. of omiſſion and commiſſion, both in thought, word, and deed, he is *in a ſtate of ſin and condemnation*, having GOD for his enemy, yea, is an *heir of wrath*, Eph. ii. 3. and of eternal vengeance of Hell fire: According to that of the Apoſtle; *All have ſinned, and are become guilty*

guilty before GOD, and have come ſhort of the glory of God, Rom. iii. 19, 23. *Ignorance of danger* may give *quiet* to the mind for a time, but it can give no *ſafety*. Is not he *fooliſhly ſecure* that reſteth quietly in a ruinous houſe, not knowing his danger, until it fall upon him? Whereas, if he had known it, he would have had more *fear* and *diſquiet*; but leſs danger.

§. III. *Grounds of falſe hope diſcovered and removed.*

LET no man preſume upon *weak* and *falſe* grounds, that he ſhall eſcape the vengeance of hell, or attain to the happineſs of heaven. How *weak* and *vain* are the foundations on which many build their hopes of ſalvation, and *from* thence their *peace*, will appear by that which followeth.

1. Some think that becauſe *God made them*, ſurely he will not damn them. *True*, if they ſhould have continued good as he made them. GOD made the *Devil good*, yea an excellent creature, yet, who knoweth not, that *he ſhall be damned?* Mat. xxv. 41. If GOD ſpared not his holy *Angels*, Jude vi. after that they became ſinful: ſhall man think that he will ſpare him? A ſinful man ſhall be judged at the laſt day, not according to what he was by *God's firſt making*; but as he ſhall be found *defiled* and *corrupted* by the *Devil*, and by his *own luſts*. When *Judah became a people of no underſtanding*, it

it is ſaid, *He that made them will ſhew them, no mercy and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour*, Iſa. xxvii. 11. Thus it is ſpoken to every ſinner remaining in his ſin, notwithſtanding that GOD *made* him.

2. Some ſay *their afflictions have been ſo many, ſo great*, and *ſo laſting*, that they hope they have had their *Hell* in this life; whence it is that their hearts are quiet in reſpect of any fear of wrath and judgment at the laſt day.

I would aſk ſuch, Whether they being thus afflicted have *returned to God that ſmote them*, Iſa. ix. 13. and whether their afflictions have made them better; or whether, like *Solomon's fool brayed in a mortar*, Prov. xxvii. 22. their ſin and folly is not departed from them: *if ſo*, they muſt know, the more they have been, and now are afflicted, (if they be not reformed by it) this doth preſage that there is the more and worſe behind; as it was in the caſe of *Judah*, Iſa. i. 5. Iſa. v. 12, 13, 14. Amos 6 to 13. Many have been often and extremely corrected by their *Parents*, &c. yet, remaining *incorrigible*, have at laſt ſuffered *public execution.*

3. Some, though their ways be never ſo *evil*, yet becauſe to them GOD's Judgments are *far above out of their ſight*, and *becauſe they have no changes*, Pſal. x. 11. Pſal. lv. 6, 19. Eccl. viii. 11. GOD forbearing to execute his judgments upon them ſpeedily, they perſwade themſelves that *God ſeeth not*, or that he is not angry with them, or that *he regardeth not*, Pſal. x. 11, 13.

and

and that he will *neither do good nor bad*, thinking that *God hath forgotten*, Pſal. l. 21. or that *he is like them*, well enough pleaſed with them; hereby they lay their *Conſciences* aſleep, promiſing unto themſelves immunity from puniſhment, and *that they ſhall never be moved*, Pſal. x. 6.

Know ye that *God's forbearance* of his wrath is not becauſe he ſeeth not, or becauſe he hath forgotten, or regarded not your wickedneſs: but becauſe he would give you time and means of repentance; it is becauſe *he would not have you periſh, but come to repentance, that you may be ſaved*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. Which if you do not, this his bounty and long-ſuffering maketh way for his juſtice, and ſerveth to leave you without excuſe; and to *heap up wrath for you againſt the day of judgment, the day of the revelation of the juſt judgment of God*, Rom. ii. 4, 5, 6. who ſhall render to every man according to his works. For *God knoweth how to reſerve the wicked to the day of Judgment to be puniſhed*, 2 Pet. ii. 9. He will take his time *to hear*, and *afflict* you, Pſal. lv. 19. when he *ſhall ſet* all the ſins, of you that forget him, *in order* before you, Pſal. l. 21, 22. then (if your ſpeedy repentance do not now prevent it) *he will tear you in pieces when there ſhall be none to deliver*. The *longer* he was in fetching his blow, the more *deadly* will his ſtroke be when it cometh. Many *malefactors are not ſo much as called at a petty Seſſions*, when leſs offenders are both called and puniſhed; yet have they no cauſe to promiſe ſafety to themſelves,

for

for *they are reſerved for a more ſolemn trial, and execution at the grand Aſſizes.* So wicked men that are not *afflicted* here, are *reſerved for the laſt Judgment*, at the great and terrible day of the *Lord.*

4. There are ſome which hope that God doth love them, and that he doth intend to ſave them; for *they proſper in every thing*, and are not in trouble and diſtreſs as other men; hereupon their Conſciences are quiet, and without fear.

Let me tell you who thus think, that, this is a poor foundation to build your hope upon. What? *are you the better for your proſperity?* are you *more thankful*, and *more obedient?* Do you the *more good*, by as much as you do *proſper more? If ſo*; *well*, if not; know, *Solomon*, by the *Spirit* of truth, telleth you that *no man can know God's love or hatred by all that is before him*, Eccl. ix. 1, 2. be it proſperity or adverſity. In theſe things there may be *one and the ſame event* to the righteous and to the wicked. Know moreover, that the wicked, for the moſt part, thrive moſt in this world; God giving them their *portion in this life*, Pſal. xvii. 14. wherewith they nouriſh themſelves againſt the day of ſlaughter, making their own *table their ſnare*, Pſal. lxix. 22. and their *proſperity their ruin*, Prov. i. 32.

5. There are many, who *compare themſelves, with themſelves*, paſſing by their own many ſins, looking only upon their own *hypocritical and civil good purpoſes and deeds*; comparing alſo *their ſins* with

with the *notorious ſins* of GOD's people committed *before their Converſion*, Luke xviii. 11. and with the *groſs ſins* of *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Lot*, *Peter*, and other godly men, *after Converſion*, hence conclude, that ſince *ſuch* are ſaved, they entertain a good opinion of *themſelves*, and hope they ſhall be ſaved, they think that all is well with them, being ſuch of whom our Saviour ſpeaketh that *need no repentance*, Luke xv. 7.

I would have theſe to know, that *they that thus compare themſelves with themſelves are not wiſe*, 2 Cor. x. 12. and they that think well of themſelves and *commend themſelves are not approved*, 2 Cor. x. 18. but *thoſe only whom the LORD commendeth.* Moreover the *ſlips and falls of the people of GOD*, *both before and after Converſion*, did ſerve for their own humbling, and for a warning to all that ſhould hear thereof. *God* knoweth how to reprove and chaſten *his own* that offend, giving them repentance to life and ſalvation; and yet juſtly will *condemn* all thoſe that ſhall preſumptuouſly ſtumble at their falls, and wilfully lie in their ſins being fallen. It is not ſafe following the beſt men in all their actions, for *in many things they ſin all*, Jam. iii. 2. not only before, but after converſion. And as the *cloud* that guided the *Iſraelites*, Exo. xiv. 20. had *two* ſides, the one *bright and ſhining*, the other *black and dark*, ſuch is the *cloud of examples of godly men.* Thoſe which will be directed by the *light ſide* thereof ſhall, with the Children of *Iſrael*, paſs ſafely towards the the *heavenly Canaan*;

but

but thoſe that will follow the *dark ſide* ſhall all periſh with the *Egyptians* in the *Red-ſea of Deſtruction.* Whatſoever any were before converſion, or whatſoever groſs ſin they fall into after converſion, if they were humble and truly penitent, none of them are laid to their charge, becauſe they are *done away by Chriſt Jeſus. Theſe* are in better ſtate than *thoſe* who for matter never committed ſo great ſins, if *Phariſee-like* they repent not of their leſſer ſins as they eſteem them, and are proud of their ſuppoſed goodneſs and well doing. For GOD, in juſtifying the humble *Publican* rather than the proud *Phariſee*, Luke xviii. 10, 11. ſheweth that *proud innocency is always worſe than humble guiltineſs.*

6. There are likewiſe *ſome others*, who are guilty to themſelves, of damnable ſins, yet *hope to be ſaved by the goodneſs of other men*, by pardons from the Pope, by abſolutions of Prieſts, and by certain penitential external acts of their own, and by good works, ſuch as alms, &c. Theſe, if they might hope of the Pope's Indulgences, and a Prieſt's Abſolution, if they fulfill their Pennance injoined, if they are devout in certain Superſtitions, in their *will-worſhip, and voluntary* religion, Col. ii. 18. their *Conſcience is quiet* for a time, notwithſtanding their foul and black ſins, even their *abominable Idolatries.*

I make known to theſe, that all this is but a blindfolding, ſmothering, and *ſtupifying the Conſcience* for a time, laying a double, and a far greater guilt upon it, and is far from being any means

means truly to *pacify* it. For how can any man have true peace from any, or from all ſuch actions as are in themſelves an actual *denying of the true Head of the Church Jeſus Chriſt*, Col. ii. 19. and are a *cleaving to a falſe Head, which is Antichriſt?* Luke xvii. 9, 10. And how can any man *merit* for himſelf, when our *Saviour* ſaith, *when he hath done all that is commanded, he is an unprofitable ſervant, and hath done but his duty*, which thing he muſt ſay and acknowledge. All theſe before-mentioned build their hopes upon *falſe grounds.* Thoſe that follow build their preſumptuous and falſe hopes upon a *miſ-application* of true grounds.

7. Many acknowledge that they have ſinned and do deſerve eternal damnation; but they ſay *God is merciful*, therefore their heart is quiet without all fear of Condemnation.

It is moſt *true* that *God is moſt merciful:* but how? Know he is not *neceſſarily merciful*, as if he could not chooſe but ſhew it to all men. He is *voluntarily merciful, ſhewing mercy* only to thoſe *unto whom he will ſhew mercy*, Rom. ix. 18. God could, and did *hate*, and in his juſtice condemn *Eſau*, Rom. ix. 13. notwithſtanding his *love*, and mercy to *Jacob.* God is *all juſtice*, as well as *all mercy*; but he hath his *ſeveral objects* of juſtice and mercy, and hath his *ſeveral veſſels* of wrath and mercy, Rom. ix. 22, 23. into which reſpectively he doth pour his wrath or mercy. When God ſpeaketh of obſtinate ſinners, he ſaith that *he will not be merciful to their iniquities*,

iniquities, Iſa. xxvii. 11. and ſaith again, *He that made them will not have mercy on them.* And *David* prayeth with a prophetical Spirit, ſaying to GOD, be not merciful to wicked tranſgreſſors, Pſal. lix. 5. and who are theſe, but ſuch as *hate to be reformed*, Pſal. l. 17, 22. who are *preſumptuous*, and *turn the grace of God into wantonneſs*, Jude iv. Nay, concerning them that *always err in their heart*, he hath in effect ſworn that he will ſhew them no mercy. For *he hath ſworn that they ſhall not enter into his reſt*, Heb. iii. 10, 11.

8. Some others go farther, they acknowledge that GOD's Juſtice muſt be ſatisfied, and they think it is ſatisfied for them, *they dreaming of univerſal redemption by Chriſt*, who indeed is ſaid to die to *take away the ſins of the world*, John i. 29. This cauſeth their *Conſciences to be quiet*, notwithſtanding that they live in ſin.

It muſt be granted that *Chriſt gave himſelf a ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. This ranſom may be called general, and for all in ſome ſenſe: but how? namely, in reſpect of the *common nature* of man which he took, and of the *common cauſe* of mankind which he undertook; and *in itſelf* it was of *ſufficient price* to redeem all men; and becauſe *applicable* to all without exception by the preaching and miniſtry of the Goſpel. And it was ſo intended by Chriſt, that the *plaiſter* ſhould be as large as the *ſore*, and that there ſhould be *no defect* in the remedy, that is, in the price, or ſacrifice of himſelf offered upon the Croſs,

Croſs, by which man ſhould be ſaved, but that all men, and each particular man might, in that reſpect *become ſaveable by Chriſt.*

Yet doth not the ſalvation of *all men* neceſſarily follow hereupon; nor muſt any part of the price which CHRIST paid, be held to be *ſuperfluous.*

But know that the *application* of the remedy, and the actual fruit of this all-ſufficient ranſom, redoundeth to thoſe which are ſaved, only by that way and means which GOD was pleaſed to appoint, *which*, (in the caſe of adults) *is faith*, John iii. 16. ch. i. 12. by which Chriſt is actually applied. Which condition, many (to whom the Goſpel doth come) make impoſſible to themſelves, through a *wilful refuſal* of the Goſpel, and Salvation itſelf by Chriſt, upon thoſe terms which GOD doth offer it.

Upon this *ſufficiency* of Chriſt's ranſom, and intention of GOD and Chriſt, that it ſhould be ſufficient to ſave *all*, is founded that *general offer of Chriſt to all and to each particular perſon to whom the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to reveal the Goſpel*, Mat. xxviii. 19. likewiſe that *univerſal precept of the Goſpel, commanding every man to repent and believe in Chriſt Jeſus*, Mat. iii. 2, 7, 8. as alſo *the univerſal promiſe of ſalvation made to every one that ſhall believe in Chriſt Jeſus*, Mark i. 15. Acts xvii. 30. John iii. 16.

Although, in one ſenſe it is true, Chriſt may be ſaid to have died for *all*, yet let no one think to enjoy the benefits of his precious death and

ſacrifice, without ſerious diligence to make their calling and election ſure. For GOD did intend this all-ſufficient *price* for all, *otherwiſe to his elect in Chriſt*, than to thoſe whom *he paſſed by and not elected*; for he intended this not only out of *a general and common love* to mankind, but out of *a peculiar love* to his Elect. He gave not *Chriſt equally and alike* to ſave all; and Chriſt did not ſo lay down his life for the *Reprobate* as for the *Elect*. Chriſt ſo died for all, that his death might be *appliable* to all. He ſo died for the Elect, that his death might be *actually applied* unto them. He ſo died for *all*, that they might have an object of faith, and that if they ſhould *believe in Chriſt*, they might be ſaved. But he ſo died for the *Elect* that they might *actually believe*, and be ſaved. Hence it is that Chriſt's death becometh effectual *to them* and *not to the other*, though ſufficient for all. Now that many believe not, they having the means of faith, the *fault is in themſelves*, Mat. xiii. 14, 15. Act. xxviii. 26, 27. Iſa. vi. 9. through their wilfulneſs, or negligence; but that any believe to Salvation, it is *of God's grace*, Mat. xiii. 11. attending his *Election*, Acts xiii. 48. and *Chriſt's dying* out of his eſpecial love for them; and not of the power of man's free will: GOD ſending his *Goſpel*, and giving the grace of faith and new obedience to thoſe whom of his free grace he hath ordained to eternal life, both where he pleaſeth and when he pleaſeth, John iii. 8.

Furthermore,

Furthermore, it muſt be conſidered that notwithſtanding the *all-ſufficiency* of Chriſt's death, whereby the new Covenant of Grace is ratified and confirmed, *the Covenant is not abſolute*, but conditional. Now what GOD propoſeth *conditionaly*, no man muſt take *abſolutely*. For GOD hath not ſaid that *all* men without exception ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt's death: although he ſaith, Chriſt died for all; but Salvation is promiſed to thoſe only who repent and believe, Mark i. 15. ch. xvi. 6.

Wherefore notwithſtanding *Chriſt's infinite merit*, whereby he ſatisfied for mankind; and notwithſtanding the *univerſality of the offer of Salvation to all to whom the Goſpel is preached*; both *Scripture* and *Experience* ſhew, that *not all, nor yet the moſt* ſhall be ſaved, and that becauſe the number of them which *repent*, and *unfeignedly believe*, whereby they make *particular* and *actual application of Chriſt*, and his merits to themſelves, are feweſt. For of thoſe *many that are called, few are choſen*, Mat. xx. 16. Wherefore let none ignorantly dream of an abſolute *univerſal* redemption, as many ſimple people do. For tho' *Chriſt* be ſaid to ſuffer to take away the ſins of the *whole world*, John i. 29. 1 John ii. 2. yet the *Scripture* ſaith that the *whole world of unbelievers, and of ungodly men*, ſhall periſh eternally, 2 Pet. ii. 5. Jude xiv. 15.

9. Many will yield that they muſt have faith and repentance, and that they muſt be ingrafted into Chriſt and become new creatures, elſe they

cannot hope to be ſaved; but *they think they are all this already*; whence followeth *quiet* of Conſcience. Whereas when it cometh to the trial, their faith and repentance are found not to be *ſound*. As will thus appear.

They think they have *faith*; (1.) Becauſe *they believe the whole Scripture* to be the good Word of God. (2.) They believe not only that there is a God, but that *Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World*, yea, according to the letter, they believe all the *Articles of the Chriſtian Faith*. (3.) They think they are believers, becauſe *they have been Baptiſed*, and have given their names unto Chriſt, Luke xiii. 26. *they profeſs the only true Religion*, they have the very true form of godlineſs in all the external exerciſes of Religion. Whereas if they believe *no more*, nor *no better*, they may know that their faith is only an *hiſtorical and general faith*, (or only a temporary faith at the beſt) *neceſſary* indeed to *Salvation*, but *not ſufficient* to ſave. The *Devils* believe as much as the *firſt*, James ii. 29. and very hypocrites may, and do profeſs, and do as much as the *ſecond*, and *third*. The Apoſtle *Paul* (having to do with hypocritical *Jews*, who becauſe of their *form of knowledge*, and profeſſion, though without practice, did nouriſh in themſelves a vain perſwaſion that they ſhould be ſaved) he removed this falſe ground of their hope, thus, ſaying, *He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; neither is that circumciſion which is outward*

ward in the fleſh, but that which is of the heart, in the Spirit and not in the letter, whoſe praiſe is not of Men, but of God, Rom. ii. 28, 29. In like manner St. *Peter* doth give all Chriſtians to know, that that *Baptiſm* which is only a putting away of the filth of the fleſh *doth not ſave,* 1 Pet. iii. 21. but that *Baptiſm* which giveth proof that the *heart is ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, as well as the body waſhed with pure water,* Heb. x. 22. ſhewing itſelf by *the anſwer which a good conſcience maketh in believing the truth,* 1 Pet. iii. 21. conſenting unto and embracing the new *Covenant,* whereof *Baptiſm is a ſeal,* of which anciently men of years made profeſſion when they were Baptiſed. Neither is it any thing worth to have the *form of godlineſs* in profeſſion, *when the power thereof is denied* by an evil converſation, 2 Tim. iii. 5. For howſoever ſuch as theſe are moſt apt to claim an intereſt in *Chriſt,* Luke xiii. 26. yet ſo long as their faith is not a *particular* faith, drawing with it affiance, and ſole reliance on *Chriſt* for Salvation, declaring its truth and life by endeavouring to perform the *new Covenant* on their part, by new obedience, in all manner of good works; *our Savior profeſſeth that he knoweth them not,* but bideth them *depart* from him, becauſe they were *workers of iniquity,* Luke xiii. 27.

But many of theſe preſume farther, that their faith is a lively and ſaving faith, becauſe as *they think they have repented and are become new creatures.* And all becauſe they had ſuch an in-

lightning as *by nature man cannot attain unto*; nay, the Word hath *affected* them much, and ſomewhat *altered* them from what they were, namely, (1.) when they were hearing a Sermon, or when GOD's rod was over them, they have *mourned, wept*, and ſhewed ſome kind of *humiliation.* (2.) *At the hearing of God's precious promiſes in the Goſpel*, in the glad tydings of Salvation, they have felt *a taſte of the heavenly gift*, and of the good Word of GOD, and of the powers of the world to come. And (3.) they find that *they do not commit many of thoſe ſins which they were uſed to commit*; and that they do *many good duties* towards GOD and man which they were uſed not to do.

But what of all this? Theſe men, as near as they come, yet going no farther, are *far from* Salvation. For the *common gifts of God's Spirit*, given unto men in the miniſtry of the *Goſpel*, may *elevate a man higher*, and carry him farther towards *heaven* than nature, art, or meer human induſtry can do; and yet if the *ſaving graces of the ſame Spirit* be not added, he will be left far ſhort of heaven. *Meer Oratory* in ſome pathetical Preachers, when they ſpeak of matters doleful and terrible, will move the affection, and *draw tears* from ſome hearers. Likewiſe a plain, powerful *conviction* of the certainty of GOD's wrath denounced; and ſenſe of ſome juſt judgment of GOD *may bring forth ſome tears*, ſome humiliation, yea ſome kind of reformation. Did not *Felix* tremble, when St. *Paul* reaſoned of *Righteouſneſs*,

Righteouſneſs, *Temperance*, and *Judgment to come?* Acts xxiv. 25. Did not *Ahab* humble himſelf when the *Prophet* denounced *God's judgments* againſt him and againſt his houſe? 1 Kings xxi. 21, 27, 32. Did not the *Iſraelites* oft (when they were in diſtreſs, and when GOD did not only warn them with his Word, but ſmote them with his Rod) *return and ſeek early after God?* Pſal. lxxviii. 34.

And whereas they ſay, they *taſted* of the heavenly gift, and of the good Word of GOD, and of the powers of the world to come, they may know, that ſuch is the *ſweetneſs of God's Promiſes*, and ſuch is the *evidence and goodneſs of God's truth* in the glad tydings of Salvation, that (the common gift of the Spirit going with it) *all the forementioned feelings may be wrought in men altogether deſtitute of ſaving grace.* For did not the *ſeed ſown in ſtony and thorny ground* go thus far? Mat. xiii. 20, 21, 22. Did not thoſe mentioned in the *Hebrews* (who notwithſtanding all this might fall away irrecoverable) attain to thus much? Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.

Now if men not in a ſtate of grace may *go ſo far*, as hath been proved, then it muſt not be marvelled that even ſuch, with *Herod*, may alſo *reform* many things, Mark vi. 20.

Beſides, they miſtake, when they ſay, they are *changed and reformed*, if ſtill they retain any *boſom and beloved ſin*, as *Herod* did. *To change ſins*, one ſin into another, *is no change of the man*, for he changeth the *prodigality* of his youth into

covetouſneſs in old age, remaining a notorious ſinner before GOD as well now, as then; judge the like of all other; likewiſe to forbear the *act of any ſin*, becauſe they have not the *like power*, *occaſions*, *temptations*, or *means* to commit ſin as in former time, this *is no change: ſin* in theſe reſpects *hath left them*, not *they it*.

For true *converſion* and *repentance* doth conſiſt of a true and thorough change of the *whole* man, whereby not only *ſome actions are changed*, but firſt and chiefly *the whole frame and diſpoſition of the heart is* changed and ſet right towards GOD, from *evil to good*, as well as from *darkneſs to light*, Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24. Rom. xii. 2. And whereas man is naturally earthly minded, and maketh himſelf his utmoſt end; ſo that either he only *mindeth earthly things*, or if he mind heavenly things, it is *in an earthly manner*, and to an *earthly* end, as did *Jehu*, 2 Kings 10. if this man have truly repented, and is indeed converted, he becometh *heavenly minded*, Col. iii. 1, 2. he maketh GOD and his glory his *chief* and higheſt end; inſomuch that when he hath cauſe to mind earthly things, his will and deſire is to mind them in an *heavenly manner*, and to an *heavenly* end. If you would judge more fully and clearly of this true change; ſee at large the deſcription, and *ſigns of uprightneſs* before delivered, chap. 12.

Laſt of all, there are many preſume (that although as yet they have no ſaving faith in Chriſt, nor ſound repentance) that *God will give*

them

them ſpace and grace to repent, and believe before they die. Whence it is they have peace for the preſent.

Theſe muſt give me leave to tell them that they put themſelves upon a *deſperate hazard*, and adventure.

Firſt, who can promiſe unto himſelf *one minute* of time more than the preſent, ſince every man's breath is in his noſtrils ready to expire every moment? Beſides, the *Spirit* ſaith, *God doth bring wicked men to deſolation as in a moment*, Pſal. lxxiii. 19. And again, *He that being often warned, hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed without remedy*, Prov. xxix. 1.

(2.) *Suppoſe they may have time*, yet *whether they ſhall have grace to believe and repent*, is much to be doubted. For the longer repentance is delayed, the heart is more *hardened*, and *indiſpoſed* to repentance, through the *deceitfulneſs of ſin*, Heb. iii. 13, 15, 19. And it is a judgment of GOD upon ſuch, as are not led to repentance *by the riches of God's goodneſs, forbearance, and long-ſuffering*, that he ſhould leave them to their *impenitent hearts*, that cannot repent, Rom. ii. 5. *ſo treaſuring up unto themſelves wrath againſt the day of wrath*, Rom. ii. 5. Cuſtom in ſin doth ſo *root* and *habituate* it in man, that it will be as hard for him by his own will and power to repent hereafter (he neglecting GOD's preſent call and offer of grace) as it is for the *Blackmoor to change his ſkin, or the Leopard his ſpots*, Jer. xiii. 23.

It cannot be denied, but that GOD is free, and if he pleaſe, may *open a door of hope*, and *gate of mercy* unto the moſt obſtinate ſinner, who hath deferred his repentance to his old age, Hoſea ii. 15. wherefore if ſuch a one find his heart to be broken with remorſe for his former ſins, and is *troubled in conſcience for this his ſin of not accepting of God's grace* when it was offered; I wiſh him to *humble himſelf* before *God*, and *entertain hope*. For *God* hath promiſed pardon to the penitent *whenſoever they repent*, Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. And though no man can repent when he will, yet ſuch a one may hope that GOD is *now* giving him repentance, in that he hath *touched his heart*, and made it to be burdened with *ſin*.

Yet for all this hope which I give to ſuch a man, know, that it is *very ſeldom* to be found, that thoſe that continued to deſpiſe grace until old age, did *ever* repent; but GOD left them juſtly to periſh in their impenitency, becauſe they deſpiſed the means of grace, and the ſeaſon in which he did call them to repentance, and did offer them his grace, whereby they might repent. GOD dealeth with all ſinners uſually, as he ſaid he would do, and as he did to *Judah*, *Becauſe I would have purged thee* (ſaid he) that is, I took the only courſe to purge thee, and bring thee to repentance, *and thou waſt not purged, therefore thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſs any more, till I have cauſed my fury to reſt on thee*, Ezek. xxiv. 13.—Thus I have endeavoured to diſcover and remove the *falſe grounds*

and

and *miſapplication of true grounds*, whereby the *Conſcience* is deluded, and brought into a *dangerous* and *falſe peace*.

In the third place, he that would not be deceived with a *falſe* peace, inſtead of a *true*, muſt *beware of obſtinacy, delight, and ſenſeleſneſs of ſin.* For this *ſears the conſcience as with an hot iron*, 1 Tim. iv. 2. Now a *ſeared* conſcience is quiet with a falſe peace, not becauſe there is *no danger*; but becauſe it doth *not feel* it. Great care muſt be taken therefore, leaſt the *conſcience* be *ſeared*, being made ſenſeleſs and hard; for then it doth altogether, or for the moſt part, forbear to check or accuſe for ſin, be it never ſo heinous.

This *ſearedneſs* is cauſed by a wilful *cuſtomary* living in any ſin; but eſpecially by living in any *groſs* ſin, or in the *allowance* and delight in any known ſin; alſo by allowed *hypocriſy*, and diſſimulation in any thing, 1 Tim. iv. 2. and by doing any thing *contrary to the clear light of nature*, Rom. i. 27. Jude 10. Eph. iv. 18, 19. planted in a man's own head or heart; or *contrary to the clear light of grace*, Heb. x. 26. ſhining in the motions of the Spirit, in the checks of conſcience, and in the inſtructions of the *word*.

Keep therefore the conſcience tender by all means; (1) By *harkening* readily to the voice of the word; (2) By a careful *ſurvey* of your ways daily. (3) By keeping the conſcience ſoft with *godly ſorrow* for ſin. (4) *By harkening to the*

voice

voice of conſcience admoniſhing, and checking for ſin.

Either of theſe three kinds of conſcience, *viz.* the *blind*, *preſumptuous*, and *ſeared* conſcience will admit of a kind of *peace* (or *truce* rather) for a while, while it ſleepeth; but what God ſaid of *Cain*'s ſin, muſt be conceived of all ſin; *If thou doſt not well, ſin lieth at the door*, Gen. iv. 7. And upon what terms ſoever it lies ſtill, and trouble not the *conſcience* for a time, yet it will awake in its time, and then by *as much* as it did admit of ſome peace and quiet, it will grow *more* turbulent, mad, and furious; and (if God give not repentance) this *falſe peace* endeth for the moſt part either in a *reprobate mind*, Rom. i. 21—29. or *a deſperate end*, Mat. xxvii. 5. even in this life, beſides the helliſh horrors in that which is to come.

Now to the end that no man ſhould quiet his heart in this *falſe* and *dangerous peace*, whether it proceed from the aforementioned cauſes, or any other; I would adviſe him to *try* his peace, whether it be not *falſe*, by theſe infallible marks.

Firſt, *is any man at peace with God's enemies*, allowing himſelf in the love of thoſe things or perſons which hate God, and which are hated of God, ſuch as are the *world* and the *things of the world*, whereby he denieth the power of godlineſs; delighting in any evil company, or living in any wilful or groſs ſin, as *vain or falſe ſwearing*, open *prophanation of the ſabbath*, *malice*, *adultery*, *theft*, *lying*, or in any of thoſe mentioned,

mentioned, 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3. or in any *known ſin with allowance.* The Holy Ghoſt ſaith of ſuch, that *the love of God is not in them*, therefore the *peace of God is not in them*, 1 John ii. 15. and whoſoever maketh himſelf *a friend* to his luſts and to the world, maketh himſelf an *enemy* of God, Jam. iv. 4. As any man is at *peace* with the *fleſh*, the *world*, and the *devil*, he *is not at true peace with God, nor God with him.* If any ſuch expect peace, and ſhould aſk *is it peace?* anſwer may be made like to that which *Jehu* made, *What have you to do with peace? What peace ſo long as your notorious ſins and rebellions*, wherein you delight, *are ſo many?* 2 King. ix. 19, 22. For he that careth not to keep *a good conſcience*, towards God and towards men, cannot have *true peace of conſcience.* Heb. xiii. 8. For there is no true peace but in a *good conſcience.*

Secondly, *Is any man, not at peace, but at war rather, with God's friends*, and with the things which God loveth; being out of love with ſpiritual and devout prayer, hearing the word, the company of God's people, and the like? if any man deſpiſe the things God commandeth, and loveth; certainly, *God and he are not reconciled*, 2 Tim. iii. 5. and whatſoever his *form of godlineſs be*, God eſteemeth him to be yet in a ſtate of perdition. For whoſoever *ſaith he knoweth God*, but yet *loveth not, and keepeth not his commandments, he is a liar*, 1 John ii. 4. And if any man love not his brother, whatſoever ſhew

of

of peace and friendſhip is betwixt God and him, I am ſure God ſaith, *he that doth not righteouſneſs is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother*, 1 John iii. 10. he is a child of the devil, and therefore hath *no true peace* with God.

Thirdly, He whoſe *quiet of heart and conſcience is from falſe peace, is willing to take it for granted, that his peace is ſound and good*; and cannot abide to *look into*, or to *enquire* into his peace, to try whether it be true, or whether it be falſe or no; being (as it ſeemeth) afraid leaſt ſtirring the mud and filth that lieth in the bottom of his heart, he ſhould *diſquiet* it. And for this cauſe it is that *ſuch a one cannot endure a ſearching miniſtry*, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. Acts vii. 54. nor will like that *miniſter* which will dive into the conſcience, by laying the heart and conſcience open to the light and purity of God's *word*.

Thus I have ſhewed you what is a firſt and chief *impediment* to be removed, *viz. preſumption* and *falſe hope*, if you would have true peace; for *falſe hopes* breed only *falſe peace*.

CHAP. XV.

Concerning falſe Fears.

THE ſecond head to which I reduced *impediments* to true peace, is *falſe fear*; for if you doubt, *fear*, or deſpair of your eſtate *without cauſe*, it will much diſturb and hinder your *peace*.

§. I.

§. I. *Of needful, holy, Fear.*

THERE is an *holy fear and deſpair* wrought in man, when GOD firſt *convinceth* his heart and conſcience of *ſin*; whereupon (through ſenſe of GOD's wrath and heavy diſpleaſure, together with a ſenſe of his own diſability in himſelf to ſatisfy and . . aſe God's wrath) he is in great perplexity; being out of all hopes to obtain GOD's favour, or to eſcape the vengeance of *hell* by any thing which he of himſelf can do, or procure. This is wrought more or leſs in every man of years before converſion, as in thoſe which were *pricked at heart* at St. *Peter*'s Sermon, Acts ii. 37. and in St. *Paul* himſelf, and in the *jaylor*, Acts 16. 29. This is a *good neceſſary fear*, ſerving to prepare a man to his converſion. For in *God*'s order of working, he firſt ſendeth the *Spirit of bondage to fear*, before he ſendeth the *Spirit of Adoption* to enable a man *to cry Abba father*, Rom. viii. 15. This fear, and trouble of conſcience riſing from it, is good; and maketh way to true peace.

Moreover, after that a man is converted, though he have no cauſe to fear damnation; yet he hath much matter of *fear*, for as much as he is yet ſubject unto many *evils* both of ſin and pain; as, leaſt he offend GOD, and cauſe his angry countenance, and his judgments; alſo, leaſt he ſhould fall back from ſome degrees of grace received, and leaſt he fall into ſome dangerous

dangerous ſin, and ſo looſe his evidence of heaven, and comforts of the *Spirit.* Wherefore we are commanded to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12. and *to paſs the whole time of our ſojourning here in fear*, 1 Pet. i. 17.

This *fear*, while it keepeth due meaſure, cauſeth a man to be *circumſpect and watchful* leaſt he fall, it exciteth him to repent, and quickeneth him to aſk pardon and grace to recover when he is fallen; yea, is an excellent means to prevent trouble, and to procure peace of Conſcience. But the *fear* of which I am to ſpeak, and which, becauſe it diſturbeth true peace is to be removed, is a groundleſs and *cauſeleſs fear* that a man is not in a ſtate of grace, although he hath yeilded himſelf to *Chriſt*, by true faith and converſion; and hath not only given good hope to others; but (if he would ſee it) hath cauſe to conceive good hope that he is indeed in the ſtate of Grace.

§. II. *Of cauſeleſs Fear, and the Springs thereof.*

THIS *fear* may ariſe either from *natural diſtempers*, Satan joining with them. Or from *ſpiritual temptations*, riſing from cauſeleſs doubts.

(1.) Of fears which ariſe from *natural diſtempers.*

By *natural diſtempers*, I mean a diſpoſition to *frenzy*, or *melancholy*, in which ſtates of body the ſpirits are corrupted through ſuperabundance of

of *choler* and *melancholy*, whereby firſt the *brain* (where all notions of things are framed) is diſtempered, and the power of *imagination* corrupted, whence ariſe ſtrange fancies, doubts, and fearful thoughts. Then, ſecondly, by reaſon of the intercourſe of the ſpirits between the head and the heart, the *heart* is diſtempered and filled with grief, deſpair, and horror, through manifold fears of danger, yea, of damnation; eſpecially when *Satan* concurs with thoſe humours, which as he eaſily can, ſo he readily will do, if GOD permit.

Where there is trouble of this ſort, it uſually bringeth forth *ſtrange* and *violent* effects, both in body and mind, and that in him that is *regenerate*, as well as in he that is *unregenerate*. Yea ſo far, that (which is fearful to think) even thoſe *who* (when they were fully themſelves) *did truely fear God*, have in the fits of their diſtemper, (through impotency of their uſe of reaſon, and through the *Devil*'s forcible inſtigation) had thoughts, and attempts of laying violent hands upon themſelves and others, and when they have not well known what they have done or ſaid, have been heard to break out into oaths, curſing, and other evil ſpeeches, who were never heard to do the like before.

Theſe *troubles* may be known from true *trouble of conſcience*, by the ſtrangeneſs, unreaſonableneſs, and ſenſeleſneſs of their conceits in *other things*; as to think they have no heart, and to ſay they cannot do that which indeed they do,

and

and a thouſand other odd conceits which ſtanders by ſee to be moſt falſe. Whereby any man may ſee that the root of this diſturbance is in the *fancy*, and not in the heart.

Although, both the *regenerate* and *unregenerate*, according as they are in a like degree diſtempered, are in moſt things alike; yet in this they *differ*; ſome beams of *holineſs* will glance forth now and then in the *regenerate*, which doth not in the *unregenerate*, eſpecially in the intermiſſions of their fits. Their deſires will be found to be different, and if they both recover, the one returneth to his uſual courſe of *holineſs* with increaſe: the other (except God work with the affliction to converſion) continueth in his accuſtomed *wickedneſs*. It pleaſeth God, that for the moſt part his own children who are thus diſtempered, have the ſtrength of their *melancholy* worn out and ſubdued before they die, at which time they have ſome ſenſe of God's favour to their comfort; but if their diſeaſe continue, it is poſſible they may *die lunatics*, and (if you judge by their ſpeeches) *deſpairing*, which is not to be imputed unto them, but to their *diſeaſe*, or unto *Satan* working by the diſeaſe; if they gave good teſtimony of holineſs in *former* times.

When theſe troubles are meerly from bodily diſtempers, though they be not *troubles of conſcience*, yet they make a man uncapable of the ſenſe of *peace of conſcience*. Therefore whoſoever would enjoy the benefit of the peace of his conſcience,

conſcience, muſt do what in him lieth, to prevent or remove theſe *diſtempers*. And becauſe they grow for the moſt part from *natural cauſes*, therefore *natural* as well as *ſpiritual remedies* muſt be uſed.

1. Take heed of all ſuch things as *feed* thoſe humours of choler and melancholy, which muſt be learned of experienced men, and of ſkilful *Phyſicians*, and, when need is, take *Phyſick*.

2. Avoid all *unneceſſary ſolitude*, and as much as may be keep company with ſuch as truly fear *God*, eſpecially with thoſe who are wiſe, full of chearfulneſs and joy in the Lord.

3. Forbear all ſuch things as *ſtir up* theſe humours; as, *over much ſtudy*, and muſing too much upon any thing, likewiſe *all ſudden and violent paſſions of anger*, *immoderate grief*, &c.

4. Shun *Idleneſs*, and according to ſtrength and means be fully employed in ſome lawful buſineſs.

5. Out of the fit, the party thus affected muſt not oppreſs his heart with *fear* of falling into it again, any more than to quicken him to prayer, and to cauſe him to caſt himſelf upon GOD.

6. Out of the fits (and in them alſo if the party diſtempered be capable) *ſpiritual counſel* is to be given out of GOD's *Word*, wiſely, according as the party is fit for it, whether to *humble him*, if he hath not been ſufficiently humbled, or to *build him up and comfort him*, if he be already humbled.

7. Laſtly,

7. Laſtly, remember always that when the troubled perſon is himſelf, that he be moved to *prayer*, and that others then *pray* much with him, and at al times pray much for him.

When theſe *troubles are mixt*, coming partly from *natural* diſtemper, and partly from *ſpiritual* temptation: then the *remedy muſt be mixt* of helps natural and ſpiritual. What the *natural* helps are hath been ſhewn, alſo what the *ſpiritual* in general, and ſhall be ſhewed more particularly, in removing *falſe fears* riſing from ſpiritual temptations.

The fears which riſe for the moſt part from diſtemper of *body*, may be known from thoſe, which for the moſt part, or only, riſe from the *ſpiritual* temptation, thus. When the *firſt ſort* are clearly reſolved of their doubts, and brought unto ſome good degree of chearfulneſs and comfort, they will yet, it may be, within a day or two, ſometimes within an hour or two, upon every ſlight occaſion and diſcouragement, *return to their old complaints*, and will need the ſame means to recover them again. But thoſe whoſe trouble is meerly out of *ſpiritual* temptation and trouble of conſcience, although for the time it is very grievous, and hardly removed, and ſometimes long before they receive a ſatisfying anſwer to their doubts; yet when once they receive ſatisfaction and comfort, it doth *hold and laſt* until there fall out ſome new temptation, and new matter of fear. This is becauſe their *Fancies* and

and memories are not diſturbed in ſuch a manner as the others are.

The ſeeming grounds of *fears* that a man is not in a ſtate of grace, when yet he is, are for variety almoſt infinite. I have reduced them into this order, and unto theſe heads.

Firſt, they who are taken with falſe fears, think *their ſins to be greater than can be pardoned.*

Secondly, when they are driven from that, they ſay then *they fear GOD will not pardon.* When they are driven from this, by cauſing them to take notice of the ſigns of GOD's actual love to them, which give proof that he will ſave them. Then,

Thirdly, *they will queſtion the truth* of GOD's love, and favour. But being put upon the trial whether GOD hath not already juſtified them, and given them faith in Chriſt, which are ſufficient proofs of his love; then,

Fourthly, *they will ſeem to have grounds to doubt whether they have faith*, from which they are driven, by putting them to the trial of their *Sanctification*; then,

Fifthly, *they doubt, and will object ſtrongly that they are not ſanctified*, which being undeniably proved; then,

Sixthly and laſtly, *they fear they ſhall fall away and not perſevere to the end.* Which *fear* being taken away alſo, and all is come to this good iſſue, they ſhall have no cauſe of diſquiet fear.

This is the eaſieſt, moſt familiar, and the moſt natural method (ſo far as I can judge) both in propoſing, and in removing *falſe fears.*

(2.) Of

(2.) Of fears which ariſe from thoughts of the *greatneſs* of puniſhment and ſin.

Firſt, ſome in their fits of deſpair, ſpeak almoſt in *Cain's* words (ſaying) that their *puniſhment* which they partly feel, and which they moſt of all fear, *is greater than they can bear, or than can be forgiven*, Gen. iv. 14.

I anſwer ſuch. If ſenſe and *fear of wrath and puniſhment*, be your trouble, I would have you not to buſy your thoughts about the *puniſhment*; but fix them upon your *ſins*, which are the only cauſe of puniſhment; for get deliverance from the guilt and power of *ſin*, and in one and the ſame work you free yourſelf from *the puniſhment*. Labour therefore that your heart may bleed with godly ſorrow *for ſin*, cry out as *David* did againſt his ſin, Pſal. li. 4, 5. ſo do you againſt yours, confeſs them to GOD, ſtrike at the root of ſin, at the ſin of your *nature*, wherein you were conceived, aggravate your *actual* ſins, hide none, ſpare none, find out, arraign, accuſe, condemn your ſins, and yourſelf for them, grow firſt into utter deteſtation of your *ſins*, which have brought preſent puniſhment, and a ſenſe and fear of the eternal vengeance of *hell-fire*; then likewiſe grow into a diſlike with *yourſelf* for ſin, *loath yourſelf* in your own ſight for your iniquities, and for your abominations, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. Now when you are as a priſoner at the bar, who hath received ſentence of condemnation, when you are in your own apprehenſion a damned wretch, fearing every day to be executed; Oh, then it concerneth

concerneth you, and it is your part and duty to turn to *GOD*, the King of Kings, whoſe *name* and *nature is to forgive iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſins*; and, that you may be accepted, go to him by *Jeſus Chriſt*, whoſe *Office* is to take away your ſins, and to preſent you without ſin to his Father; whoſe *Office* is alſo to procure and ſue out your pardon. Wherefore in *Chriſt's name pray, and aſk pardon of God. For his ſon Jeſus Chriſt's ſake*, and withal *be as earneſt in aſking grace* and power againſt your ſin, that you may ſerve him in all well pleaſing. Do this as for your life, with all truth and earneſtneſs; then you *may*, nay, *ought* to believe that *God* for *Chriſt's* ſake hath *pardoned* your ſin, and hath *done away* the puniſhment thereof. For this is according to the Word of Truth, even as true as God is, who hath commanded you to do thus, and to believe in him.

But ſome will reply, this putting me into a conſideration of my ſins, breeds all my diſtreſs and fear, for I find them *greater and more than can be pardoned.*

Oh; *Say not ſo*, for you can hardly commit a greater ſin than indeed to think and to ſay ſo. *It is blaſphemy againſt GOD*; yet this ſin (if you will follow God's Counſel) and all others may, and ſhall be pardoned. I intend not to extenuate and *leſſen your ſin*; but you muſt give me leave to *magnify God's truth and mercy*, and to *extol Chriſt's love and merit.* Howſoever it is true, that

that becauſe ſin is a tranſgreſſion of a law of infinite holineſs and equity; and in reſpect of the evil diſpoſition of the heart, is of infinite intention, and would perpetuate itſelf infinitely, if it had time and means; and becauſe God, the Perſon againſt whom ſin is committed, is infinite, therefore *ſin* muſt needs contract an *infinite guilt*, and deſerve *infinite puniſhment*.

Secondly, Conſider that the *price* to ſatisfy God's juſtice, namely, the death of Christ, the only begotten Son of *God*, doth *exceed all ſin* in infiniteneſs of ſatisfaction of God's juſtice and wrath due for ſin. For if *Chriſt's* death be a ſufficient ranſom for the ſins of all *God's* elect in general; then much more of *thine* in particular, whoſoever thou be, and how great, and how many ſins ſoever thou haſt committed.

Thirdly, Know that the *mercy of God*, the forgiver of ſin, is abſolutely and every way infinite. For mercy in God is not a *quality*, but is his *very nature*, as is clear by the deſcription of his *Name*, proclaimed, Exod. xxxiv. 6. which rightly underſtood and believed, removeth all the objections which a fearful heart can make againſt himſelf, from the conſideration of his ſins.

Firſt, *He is merciful*, that is, he is compaſſionate, (and to ſpeak after the manner of man) is one that hath *bowels of pity*, which yearn within him at the beholding of thy miſeries,

not

not willing to puniſh and put thee to pain, but ready to ſuccour and do thee good.

But I am ſo *vile*, and ſo *ill deſerving*, that there is nothing in me to move him to pity me, and do me good.

2. He is *Gracious*; whom he loveth, he loveth *freely*, of his own gracious diſpoſition, Hoſea xiv. 4. *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will not remember thy ſins*, Iſa. xliii. 25. And when God ſaith he would ſprinkle clear water upon ſinners, and that he would give them a new heart, *&c.* he ſaith, *not for your ſakes do I this*, ſaith the *Lord God*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 32. That you ſhould be *ſenſible* of your own miſery, and then, in the ſenſe thereof, that God may be *enquired after* and ſought unto for mercy, is all which he expecteth from you to move him to pity and mercy; ver. 37. and ſuch is his graciouſneſs, that he will work this *ſenſe* and this *deſire* in you, that he may have mercy.

But I have a *long time* provoked him.

3. He is *long-ſuffering* towards you, *not willing that you ſhould periſh, but that you ſhould come to repentance*, 2 Pet. iii. 9, 15. but waiteth ſtill for your repentance and reformation, that you may be ſaved.

Yea, but I am deſtitute of *all goodneſs* and *grace* to turn unto him, or do any thing that may pleaſe him.

4. He is *abundant in goodneſs* and kindneſs; he that hath been abundant towards others hereto-

fore in giving them *grace*, and making them *good*, his ſtore is not diminiſhed, but he hath all grace and goodneſs to communicate to *you* alſo, and to make you good.

Yea, but I fear, though God can, yet God *will not* forgive me, and give me grace.

5. He is *abundant in truth*, not only the goodneſs of his gracious diſpoſition *maketh him willing*, but the abundance of his truth *bindeth him to be willing*, and doth give ſufficient proof unto you that he is willing. *He hath made ſure promiſes* to take away your ſin, and to forgive it; and not yours only, but *reſerveth mercy for thouſands*. Believe therefore that *God* both *can* and *will* forgive you.

Yea, but my ſins are *ſuch* and *ſuch*; innumerable, heinous, and moſt abominable. I am guilty of ſins of all ſorts.

6. He *forgiveth iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin*. He is the *God* that will ſubdue *all* your iniquities, and caſt *all* your ſins into the bottom of the Sea, Mic. vii. 19.

Yea, but I *renew* my ſins daily.

7. I anſwer out of the *Pſalm*. His mercy is an *everlaſting mercy*, his mercy endureth for ever, Pſal. cxviii. 1. He bideth you to aſk forgiveneſs of ſin *daily*, Mat. vi. 11. therefore he can and will forgive ſin *daily*; yea, if you ſin *ſeventy times ſeven in a day*, Luke xvii. 4. Mat. xviii. 22. and ſhall confeſs it to *God* with a penitent heart, he will forgive; for he that biddeth you be ſo merciful

merciful to your *brother*, will *himſelf* forgive much more, when you ſeek unto him.

I, but I have not only committed open and groſs ſins, both before and ſince I had knowledge of GOD; but I have been a very *Hypocrite*, making profeſſion of GOD, and yet daily commiting grievous ſins againſt him.

8. What then? Will you ſay your ſins are unpardonable? God forbid. But ſay, I will follow the counſel which GOD gave to ſuch abominable hypocrites. *I will waſh me and make me clean*, Iſa. i. 16. *I will*, by God's grace, *waſh my heart from iniquity, and my hands from wickedneſs*, Jer. iv. 14. by waſhing myſelf in the laver of regeneration, bathing myſelf in *Chriſt's blood*, and in the pure water of the word of truth, applying myſelf to them, and them to me by faith. Say in this caſe, *I will hear what God will ſpeak*, Pſal. lxxxv. 8. And know, that if you will follow his counſel; If you will hearken to his reaſoning, and embrace his gracious offer made to you in *Chriſt Jeſus*, the iſſue will be this, *though your ſins have been moſt groſs, double dyed, even as crimſon and ſcarlet; they ſhall be as wool, even as white as ſnow*, Iſa. i. 18. God will then *ſpeak peace unto you*, as unto other his ſaints; only he will forbid you to *return to folly*.

For not only thoſe which committed groſs ſins through *ignorance* before their converſion, as did *Abraham* in idolatry, and St. *Paul* in perſecuting; nor yet only thoſe which committed

groſs ſins through *infirmity* after their converſion, as did *Noah* by drunkenneſs, Gen. ix. 21. and *Lot* by inceſt alſo, Gen. xix. 33. and *Peter* by denying and forſwearing his maſter Jeſus Chriſt, Mat. xxvi. 47. obtained mercy, becauſe they ſinned ignorantly and of infirmity: but alſo thoſe that ſinned againſt *Knowledge and Conſcience*, both before and after converſion; ſinning with an *high hand*, as *Manaſſes* before, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6, 10, 12, 13. and (in the matter of *Uriah*, 1 King. xv. 5.) *David* after converſion, they obtained like mercy, and had all their ſins forgiven. Why are theſe examples recorded in *ſcripture*, but for patterns to ſinners, yea to moſt *notorious* ſinners of all ſorts, *which ſhould in after times believe in Chriſt Jeſus unto eternal life?* 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.

Be willing therefore to be *beholden* to God for forgiveneſs, and *believe* in Chriſt for forgiveneſs, which when you do, you may be aſſured that you never yet committed any ſin which is not, and which ſhall not *be forgiven.*

For was it not the end, why Chriſt came into the world, that he might ſave ſinners, yea, *chief* of ſinners as well as others, 1 Tim. ii. 15, 16. Was he not wounded for *tranſgreſſions*, viz. of all ſorts, Iſa. liii. 5. Is not the end of his coming in his goſpel to call *ſinners* to repentance, Luke v. 32. What ſinner doth he mean there, but ſuch as you are, who are laden and burdened with your ſin? Doth he not ſay, *if any man ſin*, obſerve, if any man, *we have an advocate with*

with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, 1 John ii. 1. Who by being made *a curſe* for you, *hath redeemed you from the curſe of the whole law,* Gal. iii. 23. Therefore from the curſe due unto you for your *greateſt* ſin.

However it is impoſſible for a notorious ſinner, yea for any ſinner, by his own power or worth to enter into the kingdom of Heaven; yet, know, what is *impoſſible* with man is *poſſible* with God, Mat. xix. 26. *Is any thing too hard for the Lord,* Gen. xviii. 14. He can alter and renew you, and *give you* faith and repentance, he can make theſe things poſſible to you that believe: yea, *all things are poſſible to him that believeth,* Mark ix. 23.

Yes you will ſay, *if I did believe.* Why, *what if you do not believe?* It is not *hard* with him, if you come to his *means of faith,* if you hearken to the *precepts and promiſes of the word,* and conſider that the *God of truth* ſpeaketh in them, I ſay, it is not hard for him in the uſe of theſe means to *cauſe you to believe.*

Wherefore neither *greatneſs* of ſin, *nor multitude* of ſins ſhould, becauſe of their greatneſs, and multitude, make you utterly *deſpair* of ſalvation, or fear damnation; when once you can believe, or but *will* and *deſire* to obey and believe, Iſa. i. 19. the great cauſe of *fear* is paſt.

I know *if you never had ſinned,* you would not fear damnation. Now to *a man whoſe ſins are remitted, his ſins* (though *ſin dwell* in him, Rom. vii. 20.) *are as if they were not, or never had*

been. For *they are blotted out of God's remembrance.* I, even I am he (ſaith *God*) *that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my names ſake, and will not remember thy ſins,* Iſa. xliii. 25. And who is like thee (ſaith the *Prophet*) that *pardoneth iniquities,* &c. *he will have compaſſion upon us, he will ſubdue our iniquities, and will caſt all our ſins into the bottom of the ſea,* Micah vii. 18, 19. A debt when it is paid by the *Surety,* putteth the *Principal* out of debt, though he paid never a penny of it himſelf.. The *holy Ghoſt* ſpeaketh moſt comfortably, ſaying, that *God doth find no ſin* in them whoſe ſins are pardoned, Rev. xiv. 5. *In thoſe days, and at that time, ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found,* but how may this be, he giveth the reaſon, *for I will pardon them whom I reſerve,* Jer. l. 20.

If you believe that GOD can pardon *any* ſin, even the leaſt, you have like reaſon to believe that GOD can pardon *all,* yea, the greateſt; for if GOD can do *any* thing, he can do *every* thing, becauſe he is infinite. He can as eaſily ſay, thy *ſins* are *forgiven* thee, *all thy ſins* are forgiven thee, as to ſay, *Riſe and Walk,* Mat. ix. 5. He can as well ſave one that hath been long dead, rotten, and ſtinking in his ſin, as one newly fallen into ſin. For he can as eaſily ſay, *Lazarus come forth,* John xi. 43. as to ſay, *Damſel, I ſay to thee, ariſe,* Mark v. 41.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, to make an end of removing this *fear*, I aſk thee that art troubled with the *greatneſs* of thy ſins paſt, and with fear that they can never be pardoned, *how ſtand you affected to preſent ſins?* Do you *hate* and *loath* them? Do you uſe what *means* you can to be free from them? Are you out of love with yourſelf, and *humbled* becauſe you have indulged them to GOD's diſhonour, and your own hurt? And do you reſolve (thro' faith in Chriſt Jeſus) to *return from your evil ways*, and to enter upon an holy courſe of life, if GOD ſhall pleaſe to enable you, and is it your hearty deſire *to have* this grace to be able? And are you *afraid*, and have you now a care leaſt you fall knowingly into ſin; then let Satan, and a fearful heart object what they can, you may ſay, though my ſins have been great and heinous, for which I *loath myſelf* and am aſham'd, yet now I ſee that they were not only *pardonable*, but are already through the rich mercy of GOD *pardoned*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25.—33. For theſe are ſigns of a new heart and a new mind. Now to whomſoever GOD giveth the *leaſt meaſure of ſaving grace*, to them hath he *firſt given pardon of ſin*, and will yet *abundantly pardon*. For he ſaith, *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return to the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

§. III. *Fears concerning not being elected, removed.*

THERE are others who make no doubt of GOD's power, they believe he can forgive them; but they fear, yea, ſtrongly conclude, that he *will not pardon* them, and that becauſe they are *Reprobates* (as they ſay) for they ſee no ſigns of *Election*, but much to the contrary.

I anſwer theſe thus. When your Conſciences are firſt wounded with a ſenſe of GOD's wrath for ſin; it is very like, that before you have believed and repented, you cannot diſcern *any ſigns* of GOD's favour, but of his anger; for as yet you are *not actually* in a ſtate of grace, and in his favour. And often times after the chriſtian doth believe (though there be always matter enough to give proof of his Election) yet he cannot always *ſee it*. If you be in *either* of theſe eſtates, (ſuppoſe the worſt) yet you have no reaſon to conclude that you are *Reprobates*.

It is true, that *God before the foundation of the world, fully determined with himſelf*, whom to *chooſe to Salvation* by *Grace*, to which alſo he *ordained* them: and whom *to paſs by*, and leave in their ſins, for which he *determined* in his juſt wrath to condemn them. But who theſe be, is a *ſecret*, which even the Elect themſelves cannot know, until they be *effectually called*, nay, nor being called, until by ſome experience and proofs of their faith and holineſs, they do underſtand the witneſs of the *Spirit*, which teſtifieth to their

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ſpirits, that *they* are the children of God; and do make their Calling and Election (which was always *ſure* in *God*) *ſure* to themſelves, 2 Pet. i. 5, 10. But in point of *Reprobation*, namely, that GOD hath paſſed them by, to periſh everlaſtingly in their wickedneſs, no man living can know it, except he know that he hath ſinned the ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, that unpardonable ſin.

For *God calleth men at all ages, and times*, ſome in their youth, ſome in their middle age, ſome in their old age; yea, ſome have been called at their *laſt hour*, Luke xxiii. 42, 43. Now let it be granted, that you cannot by ſearching into yourſelves find the ſigns of effectual calling, (which yet may be in you, though your dim eyes cannot perceive them) Nay, ſuppoſe that you are not yet effectually called, here is no cauſe for you utterly to *deſpair*, and ſay, you are *Reprobates*. How know you that GOD *will not* call you before you die?

It were a far wiſer and better courſe for you, that will be thus haſty in judging yourſelves to be *Reprobates*, to buſy yourſelves firſt with other things. Acquaint yourſelves with *God's revealed will* in his Word. Learn to know what God hath commanded you to do, and *do* that; alſo what he hath threatned, and *fear* that; and what he hath promiſed, and *believe*, and *reſt on* that. After you have *done this*, you may look into yourſelves, and there *read your Election written in golden and great Letters.*

For, God never intended that the *firſt leſſon* which a Chriſtian ſhould learn, ſhould be the hardeſt, and higheſt that can be learned, taken out of the book of his eternal counſel and decree; and ſo to deſcend to the *A. B. C.* of Chriſtianity. Which were a courſe moſt perp'exed, and prepoſterous. But his will is, that his ſcholars and children ſhould learn out of his written Word here on earth, firſt, that *God made all things*, Gen. i. 31. and that he made man *good*, and, how that man hearkening to Satan, found out *evil devices*, and ſo fell from grace, and from *God*, and ſo both they, and the whole world that came of their loins, became guilty of eternal damnation, Eccleſ. vii. 29. *Next* God would have you to *learn*, that he, in his infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and mercy, *thought of*, and concluded a *new Covenant of Grace*, Gen. iii. 15. xvii. 1, 2, 12. Rom. vi. 12. Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. for the effecting whereof, he found out and appointed a way and means to pacify his wrath, by ſatisfying his juſtice, puniſhing ſin in mans nature, by which he opened a way unto his mercy to ſhew it to whom he would, namely, He gave his only *Son*, *very God*, to become *very man*, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. and being made a *common perſon and ſurety* in mans ſtead, died, and endured the puniſhment due to the ſin of man, and roſe again, and was exalted to ſit at God's right hand to reign, having all authority committed unto him. Thus he made the new *Covenant of Grace*, *eſtabliſhed in his Son Je-*

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ſus Chriſt; the *tenour* and condition whereof required on *man's part* is, that man accept of, and enter into this covenant, believing in Chriſt, in whom it is eſtabliſhed; *then, whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not die, but have everlaſting life*, John iii. 16. This GOD did in his wiſdom, juſtice, mercy, and love to man, that he himſelf might be *juſt*, and yet a *juſtifier of him that is of the faith of Jeſus*, Rom. iii. 26. And hath therefore given his *Word* and *Sacraments*, and hath called, and hath *given gifts to his Miniſters*, Ephe. iv. 8. thereby to beget, and increaſe faith in men, by publiſhing this good news, and by commanding them, as *in Chriſt's ſtead*, in *God's name*, to believe, and to be reconciled to *God*, 2 Cor. v. 20. and to live no longer according to the will of their old Maſters the *Devil*, the *World*, and the *Fleſh*, under whom they were in curſed bondage; but according to the will of him that *redeemed* them, in holineſs and righteouſneſs, whoſe ſervice is a perfect and bleſſed freedom.

Now when you have learned theſe leſſons *firſt*, and by looking into yourſelves can find *faith* and *new obedience*, 2 Pet. i. 5, 10, 11. then by this your *effectual calling*, you may ſafely aſcend to that high point of your *Predeſtination*, which will give you comfort, through aſſurance that you ſhall never fall away.

When you obſerve this *order* in learning your *Election to Life*, it will not miniſter unto you matter of curious and dangerous diſpute, either with

with GOD, or man; but of high admiration, thankſgiving, and unſpeakable comfort, cauſing you to cry out with the Apoſtle, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God, &c.* Rom. xi. 33. And *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy and without blame before him in love, having Predeſtinated us unto the Adoption of Children, by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in his well beloved, &c.* Ephe. i. 3, 5, 6.

§. IV. *Of Fears concerning the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt.*

THERE are yet ſome, who having heard that there is a *ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, and that it is *unpardonable*, are full of fears that they have committed that ſin, thence concluding that they are *Reprobates*, for they ſay, that, they have ſinned wilfully againſt *knowledge* and *conſcience*, ſince they received the knowledge of the truth, and taſted of the heavenly gift, and of the good *Word* of GOD.

If you who thus object, have ſinned againſt *knowledge and conſcience*, you have much cauſe of humbling yourſelf before GOD; confeſſing it to him, aſking pardon of him, and grace to believe and repent, both which you muſt endeavour by all means. Yet I ſee no cauſe why you

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ſhould conclude ſo deſperately, that you have ſinned againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*, and are a *Reprobate*. For as few in compariſon (though too many) commit this ſin, ſo few know what it is.

All ſin *againſt knowledge and conſcience* is not this ſin, 1 Kings xv. 5. 2 Sam. xi. 4, 6, 10, 15, 25. Nor yet all wilful ſinning. It is not any *one ſin* againſt the *law*, nor yet the direct breach of the *whole law*, nor every malicious oppoſing of the *Goſpel*, Heb. x. 28. (if it be of ignorance) neither is it *every blaſphemy*, or perſecution of the Goſpel, and of thoſe that profeſs the truth, (if theſe be done out of ignorance or paſſion;) Nor yet is it every *Apoſtacy*, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. 1 Kings xi. 4, 5, 6. Heb. x. 28, 29. and falling into groſs ſins of divers ſorts, though done againſt knowledge and conſcience; yet this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, containeth all theſe, and *more*. It is a *ſin againſt the Goſpel*, and free offer and diſpenſation of grace and ſalvation by CHRIST, through the Spirit. Yet, it is not any particular ſin againſt the Goſpel, nor yet a rejecting of the whole Goſpel (*if in ignorance*;) Luke xxiii. 34. nor yet every *denying of Chriſt*, or ſudden revolting from the outward profeſſion of the Goſpel (when it is of *infirmity*, through fear, and ſuch like temptation,) Mat. xxvi. 69, 70, 74. Neither is it called the ſin againſt *Holy Ghoſt*, and is unpardonable, becauſe it is committed againſt the *Eſſence*, or *Perſon of the Holy Ghoſt*, for the Eſſence of the three Perſons in *Trinity* is all one; and the Perſon of the *Holy Ghoſt*,

Ghoſt, is not more excellent than the Perſon of the *Father*, and the *Son*; but it is called the *ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, and becometh *unpardonable*; becauſe it is againſt the *Office* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and againſt the *gracious operations* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and therein *againſt the whole bleſſed Trinity*, all whoſe works, *out of themſelves*, are *conſumate and perfected*, in the *work of the Holy Ghoſt*. Moreover, know that it is *unpardonable*, not in reſpect of GOD's *power*, but in reſpect of his *will*; He having in his holy wiſdom determined never to pardon it. And good reaſon why he ſhould will not to pardon it, in reſpect of the *kind of ſin*, if you well obſerve it; it being a *wilful and malicious refuſing of pardon upon ſuch terms as the Goſpel doth offer it*, ſcorning to be beholden unto GOD for it. You may perceive what it is, by this deſcription.

The ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is an utter, wilful, and ſpiteful rejection of the Goſpel of Salvation by Chriſt, together with an adviſed and abſolute falling away from the profeſſion of it, ſo far that againſt former knowledge and conſcience, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. *a man doth maliciouſly oppoſe and blaſpheme the Spirit of Chriſt, in the Word and Ordinances of the Goſpel, and motions of the Spirit in them; having reſiſted, rejected, and utterly quenched all thoſe common, and more inward gifts and motions wrought upon their hearts and affections, which ſometimes were entertained by them; inſomuch, that out of hatred of the Spirit of life in Chriſt, they crucify to themſelves afreſh the Son of God, and do*

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put him (both in his Ordinances of Religion, and in his members) to open ſhame, treading under foot the Son of God, counting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith they were ſanctified, an unholy thing; doing deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, Heb. x. 26, 27, 28, 29. If you carefully look into theſe places of the *Scripture,* which ſpeak of this ſin: and alſo obſerve the *oppoſition* which the *Apoſtle* maketh between *ſinning againſt the Law,* and *ſinning againſt the Goſpel,* you will clearly find out the nature of this ſin, Mat. xii. 24, 31, 32. Mark iii. 28, 29, 30. Luke xii. 10. Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. x. 26, 27, 28, 29.

But to reſolve you out of this doubt; (if you be not overcome with *Melancholy,* for then you will anſwer you know not what, which is to be pitied rather than regarded.) I would aſk you that think you have committed the ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt,* theſe queſtions. Doth it *grieve* you, that you have committed it? Could you wiſh that you *had not* committed it? If it were to be committed, would you not *forbear it* if you could chooſe? Would you eſteem yourſelf *beholden* to GOD, if he would make you partakers of the *Blood* and *Spirit of his Son,* thereby to pardon and purge your ſin, and to give you grace to repent? Nay, are you *troubled* that you cannot bring your heart unto a ſenſe of deſire of pardon and grace? If you can ſay *yea*; then, although the ſin or ſins which trouble you, may be ſome fearful ſin, of which you muſt be exhorted ſpeedily to repent: yet certainly *it not the*

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ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. It is not that *unpardonable* ſin, that *ſin unto death.* For he that committeth this ſin cannot relent, *neither will he be beholden to GOD for pardon and grace, by Chriſt's blood and ſpirit*; he cannot deſire to repent: But he is given over in GOD's juſt judgment, unto ſuch a reprobacy of mind, deadneſs of conſcience, and rebellion of will, and to ſuch an height of hatred and malice, that he is ſo *blaſphemouſly* and *deſpitefully* bent againſt the *ſpirit of holineſs*, Heb. x. 29. that it much pleaſeth him, rather than any way troubles him, that he hath ſo maliciouſly and blaſphemouſly rejected, or fallen from, perſecuted, and ſpoken blaſphemouſly againſt the *good way of Salvation by Chriſt*, and againſt the gracious operations of the *Spirit*, and againſt the members of *Chriſt*; although he was once convinced clearly, that this is the only way of Salvation, and that thoſe graces and gifts were from GOD, and that they were the dear Children of GOD whom he doth now deſpight.

§. V. *Of Fears ariſing from an accuſing Conſcience.*

OTHERS, if not the ſame perſons, object thus; GOD will certainly condemn, becauſe St. *John* hath ſaid, if their *hearts condemn them, God is greater than their hearts:* hence they infer, GOD will *condemn* them much more, John iii. 20. For they ſay, their hearts do *condemn* them.

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There is a double judgment by the heart and conſcience. It judgeth a man's *ſtate or perſon*, whether he be in a ſtate of grace, yea, or no. Alſo it judgeth a man's own *particular actions*, whether they be good or no. I take it, that this place of *John* is not to be underſtood of judging or condemning the *perſon*; for GOD in his final judgment doth not judge according to what a man's weak and erroneous conſcience judgeth, making it the rule of his judgment to condemn or abſolve any. For many a man in his preſumption *juſtifieth* himſelf in his life, when yet GOD will *condemn* him in the world to come, Hoſea xii. 8. Luke xviii. 11. and many a diſtreſſed ſoul like the *Prodigal*, Luke xv. 18, 19. and humble *Publican*, condemneth himſelf, when yet GOD will abſolve him, Luke xviii. 13, 14. For a man may have *peace with God*, yet GOD, for reaſons beſt known to his wiſdom, *doth not preſently ſpeak peace to his conſcience*, as it was with *David*; in which caſe man doth judge otherwiſe of his eſtate, than GOD doth.

This *place* is to be underſtood of *judging of particular actions*, 1 John iii. 20. namely, *whether a man, love his brother not in word and tongue only, but in deed and truth, according to the exhortation*, 1 John iii. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Which if his conſcience could teſtify for him, then it might *aſſure his heart before God, and give it boldneſs to pray unto him, in confidence to receive whatſoever he did aſk* according to his will. But if his *own conſcience* could condemn him of not loving his

his brother in deed, and in truth; then GOD, who is greater than his heart, *knowing all things*, muſt needs condemn him therein much more. This is the full ſcope of the place. Yet this I muſt needs ſay, that the *holy Ghoſt* hath inſtanced in ſuch an act, namely, of *hearty loving the brethren*, which is an infallible ſign of being in a ſtate of grace: whereby (except in caſe of extreme melancholy, or violent temptation) a man may judge, whether at preſent he be tranſlated from death to life.

If any ſhall think the place to be underſtood of judging the *perſon*, he muſt diſtinguiſh between that judgment which the heart doth give *rightly*, and that which it giveth *erroneouſly*. But ſuppoſe, that you trying yourſelves by this, your *hearts do condemn you of not loving the brethren*, can you conclude hence, that you ſhall be finally damned? *God forbid.* All that you can infer, is this; you cannot have boldneſs to pray unto him *until* you love them; nor can you aſſure yourſelves that you all have your petitions granted. And the worſt you can conclude is, that now for the *preſent*, you are not in a ſtate of grace, or at leaſt you *want proof* of being in a ſtate of grace. You muſt then uſe all GOD's *means* of being ingrafted into Chriſt, and muſt love the children of GOD, that you may have proof thereof. Did *Paul love the brethren* when he breathed out threatning, and was, as he himſelf ſaith, mad againſt them? Acts xvi. 10, 11. Was he at that time a *Reprobate?* Acts viii. 3.

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Did he not afterwards, being converted, so love God's people, that he could be content to *spend*, and *be spent himself*, for them, 2 Cor. xii. 15. So many thousands, whose consciences for the *present* may justly condemn them of not loving those that are indeed God's children, may yet love them *hereafter*, as dearly as their own souls.

Some will yet say, certainly we are *Reprobates*. For we have, according to the command of the *Apostle*, tried *whether we be in the faith*, or no, and *whether Christ be in us*, but we find neither; the *Apostle* saith, we know these to be in us, else we are *Reprobates*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

By *Reprobate* in this place, *is not meant one that is not elect*; For none of the Elect can before their conversion know, by any search, that they are in the faith, or that Christ is in them: For that cannot be known which yet is not. Many are not converted until they be thirty, forty, or fifty years old. Will you say, these in their younger years were *Reprobates?* You may say, they then were in a state of condemnation, and children of wrath, but no Reprobates. Besides, a man must not be said, not to be in the faith, and not to have Christ in him, because he doth *not know* so much. For many have faith and are in Christ, yet do not always *know* it.

The word *Reprobate*, because it is ordinarily understood, by our common people, for a man ordained to condemnation; is too harsh.

The words now rendred *except ye be Reprobates*, may (as I judge) rather be translated thus: *Except*

cept you be unapproved, or *except you be without proof*, namely, of your being in the faith, and of Chriſt's being in you, whereof you outwardly make profeſſion. As if the *Apoſtle* had ſaid, if upon trial you cannot find that you are in the faith, &c. you are *unapproved Chriſtians*. Either you have yet only a meer form of Chriſtianity, and like falſe coin, or *Reprobate ſilver*, are but *hypocrites and counterfeits*; or if you be Chriſtians in truth, yet you *are inexperienced Chriſtians*, and without *proof* of it to yourſelves.

Some may reply, if I find upon trial that I am a *counterfeit*, may I not then judge myſelf to be a *Reprobate*.

No. For firſt you may *err* in judging of yourſelf. Secondly, if you do not err, you can judge only this, that you are *not yet* in a ſtate of grace: but in the uſe of the means, you may be. God can as well convert an *Hypocrite*, as a *Pagan*. For though now you be *droſs* and *refuſe*, you may ere long be *pure gold*. For *God* in making *veſſels of honour*, doth more than all earthly *Kings*, and all their *Goldſmiths* can do; for they by their *prerogative* and *ſkill*, can make currant coin, and rich veſſels, if they have *pure* metal to work upon: But they cannot make good metal of *baſe* ſtuff, or make gold of braſs. But ſuch is the power of God's *Word* and *Spirit*, that whereas they find you baſe and droſſy ſtuff, they, by imprinting the *character* and ſtamp of *God's Image* upon your hearts, do *transform you into the*

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ſame Image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18. As ſoon as you are truly anointed with this *Spirit*, you ſhall become good gold; and ſilver veſſels of honour, fitted for the LORD's uſe, whereunto you were appointed.

§. VI. *Fears ariſing from late Repentance, anſwered.*

THERE are yet others object fearfully, ſaying that they are *caſt-aways*, and that GOD will not have mercy on them, becauſe now it is *too late*; they have paſſed the *time and date* of their Converſion, they therefore will not uſe, or at leaſt have no heart in uſing GOD's means to convert them, ſuch as prayer, reading, hearing the Word, &c. Nor yet willingly will ſuffer others to pray either with them, or for them; and all, becauſe they think it is now *too late*, and in vain, miſtaking this, and ſuch other Scriptures; *becauſe I have called* (ſaith GOD) *and you have refuſed; they ſhall call on me, and I will not anſwer*, Prov. i. 24, 28. And becauſe they think they ſin when they pray, and hear the Word, and that the more means is uſed to ſave them, their condemnation ſhall be the more increaſed. Thus *Satan*, and *a fearful heart* deludeth many.

It muſt be acknowledged, that GOD would have all men *walk and work while they have light*, John xii. 36. becauſe *the night will come when no*

man

man can work, John ix. 4. And *whilſt it is called to day*, he would have every one return, and accept of grace offered, and not to harden their hearts againſt it, Heb. iii. 15. And our Saviour bewaileth Jeruſalem, becauſe they did deſpiſe the *day of their viſitation*, Luke xix. 42, 43. All which ſheweth that GOD hath his *ſet period* of time, between his firſt and laſt offer of grace, which being paſſed, he will offer it no more; and that juſty, becauſe they took not his offer when they might. And this time is kept ſo *ſecret* with GOD, that if he offer grace to day, who can tell whether he will offer it to-morrow? Or whether he will offer it again? Who knoweth whether GOD will take him from the means of Salvation, or, will take the means of Salvation from him? All this our holy and wiſe *God*, hath *revealed in his Word*, to make men wiſe, to take the opportunity and time of grace *while it is offered.* Wherefore whoſoever hath neglected their firſt times and offers of grace, have ſinned and play'd the fool egregiouſly; for which they have cauſe to be much humbled. But for you to conclude hence that the date and time of your converſion *is out*, hath no ſufficient ground. For *it is not poſſible for you to know, that your time of converſion is paſt all recovery.* But you ſhould rather for the preſent time believe, and hope that *it is not* paſt. Indeed preſumptuouſly to put off receiving grace until *to-morrow*, is fooliſh and dangerous; but if GOD give you time till to-morrow, that you live, and it can be ſaid

to day; ſo long as you yet live, and the means of Salvation are not from you, either in their exerciſe, or out of your remembrance; but you do yet *live* to hear what GOD hath commanded you to do, and to hear what good things he yet offereth unto you with *Chriſt*; or if the means be taken from you, or you are detained from them by ſickneſs, &c. ſo long as you yet *live to call to remembrance* what GOD hath commanded you to believe and do, you cannot ſay the time is *too late*; if you do yet condemn yourſelves for refuſing grace heretofore, and are now willing and deſirous to accept of it. Moreover, would you *now* with all your heart, uſe the means of Salvation, and endeavour to believe and repent, if you thought it were not too late? And doth it grieve you that you have neglected the opportunity? And would you gain and redeem that loſt time, if you knew how? Then, I dare *in the name of God* aſſure you, that the date of your converſion is not expired. *It is not too late for you to turn unto the Lord. While it is to day*, I may boldly ſay, *harden not your heart:* which, *if you do not*, you muſt know that *now is an acceptable time, now is the day and time of your Salvation*, Heb. iii. 15. At what time ſoever GOD doth ſend his *Miniſter* unto you, by whom *GOD doth beſeech you*, they *intreating you*, as now I do, *in Chriſt's ſtead, that you would be reconciled to God*, 2 Cor. v. 20. *this is the accepted day, if you will be intreated by them*, 2 Cor. vi. 2. The day wherein GOD will accept of you is not paſt.

Moreover,

Moreover, at what time ſoever, and by what means ſoever, any man ſhall humble himſelf for ſin, and ſeek the grace of GOD in Chriſt Jeſus, the *date of God's acceptance* of him is not expired. Learn this in the example of *Manaſſes*, and many others, who had refuſed grace in their younger time; yet were converted in their *age*, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 20, 12, 13. You have *God's* expreſs words for it, who ſaith, *From the days of your fathers*, that is, for a long time, *Ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them, return unto me, and I will return unto you ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*, Mal. iii. 7.

But may not a man pray too late, and ſeek repentance in vain, as *Eſau* did, *who found no place of repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears?* Heb. xii. 17. Did not the *fooliſh Virgins* ſeek to enter into the Bride-chamber, but were not admitted? Mat. xxv. 11, 12. And did not our Saviour ſay, *many ſhall ſeek to enter in*, and ſhall not be able? Luke xiii. 24.

No man can aſk grace and *forgiveneſs of ſins* too late, if he aſk for grace and power againſt ſin heartily: But a man may aſk a *temporal bleſſing*, or the removal of a *temporal evil*, when it may be too late.

As for *Eſau*'s careful ſeeking of repentance, you muſt underſtand it not of his *own repentance* from his profaneneſs, and from other dead works, but of his *Father Iſaac's repentance*; he would have had his father to change his mind, and to

have given him the *birth-right*, which was already beſtowed upon *Jacob*, Gen. xxvii. 34, 38.

Whereas the *fooliſh Virgins* did ſeek to enter into the *Bride-chamber*, *when the door was ſhut*; know, that this is *a parable*, and muſt not be urged beyond its general ſcope, which is to ſhew, that *inſincere profeſſors of Chriſtianity*, ſuch as have only *a form of godlineſs*, *without the power of it*, although they will not live the *life* of the righteous, yet they wiſh their *end* might be like theirs, Num. xiii. 10. and becauſe of their outward profeſſion of Chriſt's name in his life, they ſecurely expect eternal life; but foraſmuch before their death, they did not provide the *oil* of truth and holineſs, therefore at the day of *Judgment*, they ſhall be diſappointed of entering into *Heaven*, which in the time of their life, they did ſo much preſume of.

The ſame anſwer may be given, unto that place, Luke xiii. 24. Yet you miſtake, when you ſay; that Chriſt ſaith, many ſhall *ſtrive* to enter and ſhall not be able. He ſaith, *Strive to enter in at the ſtraight gate*, for many I ſay to you, ſhall *ſeek* to enter, and ſhall not be able; he doth not ſay, many ſhall *ſtrive* to enter.

There is a great difference in the ſignification of the words, *ſtriving* and *ſeeking*, *Seeking* imports only a bare profeſſing of *Chriſt*, hearing the *Word*, and receiving the *Sacraments*. For thus did the men ſpoken of by our *Saviour*, who are ſaid not to be able to enter. But to *ſtrive* to enter, is to do all theſe and more; it is to

ſtrive in *ſeeking* for him, ſo that they *take up their croſs* and follow him; they give their *hearts* to him, as well as their *names*; they are hearty and ſincere in praying, hearing, receiving; they ſtrive to ſubdue their luſts, which offend Chriſt, and ſtrive to be *obedient* to his will, as well as to *believe* his promiſes, and to hope for happineſs; *this is to ſtrive*, Hoſea vi. 3. Now never any did thus *ſtrive* in ſeeking to enter (though it were the laſt day of their life) that was rejected, and not received. Wherefore ſay not it is *too late*, but ſay, the more time I have loſt, the more cauſe there is *now* I ſhould preſently ſeek my ſalvation in earneſt, and not looſe time in queſtioning, whether I ſhall be accepted or no.

§. VII. *Fears of miſ-uſing the Means of Grace, removed.*

AND whereas you ſaid, you are afraid *to uſe the means* of Salvation, for fear of increaſing your guilt and condemnation thereby; hereby you may ſee, that this is but the malice, and ſubtilty of the Devil, by keeping you from the *means*, to keep you from *Salvation*, Pſal. lxxiii. 13. For it is moſt falſe to ſay, that to pray, hear the Word, &c. is to *encreaſe your ſin*, becauſe you cannot perform theſe as you *ſhould*, and as you *would*. I am ſure, it is a greater ſin in you to *forbear* theſe neceſſary duties, out of deſpair that they ſhall not profit you, or that you

ſhall

ſhall not be accepted of *God.* You ſhould think thus, if I *do not* uſe the means of ſalvation, I ſhall certainly *periſh* everlaſtingly; but if I *do* pray, hear, &c. I *may* be ſaved; therefore in obedience to God I will do as well as I can. But little doth a man know how well he may do (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) if he would endeavour; neither can a man conceive how acceptable a little endeavour ſhall be, if he do but deſire to be true in his endeavour. For as *GOD's power is ſeen in a man's weakneſs*, ſo is *God's grace ſeen in man's inſufficiency*, 2 Chron. xxx. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 10. When we are weak, then GOD in us can be ſtrong. And when we in humility like our ſervice worſt, then, through *Chriſt*, GOD may be beſt pleaſed with them. But whatſoever you do, do not *neglect*, nor *abſent* yourſelves from exerciſes of Religion: for the *weakeſt obſervances*, *where is truth*, are far more acceptable than *entire omiſſions*. Wherefore, if (as you ſay) you would not increaſe your ſin, and thereby your damnation, be willing to *uſe*, and to join with others, in the *uſe* of all good means of Salvation; then if you be not ſaved, yet you ſhall have the leſs puniſhment. But you may be aſſured, that if in obedience to GOD's Commandment you ſhall pray, hear the Word, receive the Sacrament, and have communion and converſation with thoſe that fear GOD, you ſhall be *ſaved* in the end; (believing in Chriſt Jeſus.)

If you do not *yet feel* benefit and comfort (when you uſe theſe means of Salvation) according to your deſire? Yet you muſt *wait* the good hour both of grace and comfort, even as the *impotent people* did, who lay *waiting for the Angel's coming to move the waters*, that they might be healed of their diſeaſes, *at the pool of Bethesda*, John v. 3. For if, when GOD hideth his face, *you will wait* and look for him, Iſa. viii. 17. then *God will wait* his time to be gracious, and *bleſſed ſhall you be that wait for him*, Iſa. xxx. 18. It may be, it cometh juſtly upon you, that GOD ſhould make you *wait* his leiſure, and cauſe you to buy wiſdom with dear experience, becauſe you did once account it an *eaſy matter* to believe and repent, and therefore you did not take the *firſt offers*, but made GOD wait. If it were thus, yet deſpair not of grace, only be humbled. For *God doth not deal with us after our ſins, nor reward us after our iniquities*, but according to his rich mercy and promiſe made to us in Chriſt Jeſus, Pſal. ciii. 10.

§. VIII. *Fears ariſing from Doubts of GOD's Love, removed.*

THERE are many, who have true proofs that they are the choſen of GOD, and have reaſon to think, that God not only can, but *will* do them good: yet becauſe they will deny that to be beſtowed *upon them*, and to be *in them*, which indeed is, therefore they fear, and are cauſeleſsly

cauſeleſsly diſquieted. I would have ſuch to conſider firſt, whether *they have* not in them already evident *proofs* and *ſigns* of GOD's effectual love towards them in Chriſt. Theſe will acknowledge, that it is moſt true, that if they were ſure that GOD did love them, they ſhould not fear; but this is all their doubt, that GOD doth *not love* them.

(1.) Doubts of GOD's love becauſe of Afflictions, removed.

Some give this reaſon of their doubt. *God* hath and ſtill doth ſeverely *afflict* them, yea, ever ſince they have profeſſed the name of *Chriſt*, they are in ſomething or other *chaſtned daily*; inſomuch, that they ſeem to be in the condition of thoſe whom GOD threatened to *curſe in every thing, they put their hands unto*, Deut. xxviii. 20. Therefore (ſay they) GOD doth *not love* them.

Such weak and inconſiderate reaſonings are incident to thoſe, whom GOD truly loveth. Did not the *holy men of GOD* reaſon, and conclude thus? But when *God's Children* do thus, it is in their *haſte*; before they are well adviſed what that think or ſay, Pſal. xxxi. 22. cxvi. 11. And whence is it? Is it not from their *ignorance*, and *weakneſs*, being carried away by ſenſe? *So fooliſh was I and ignorant*, ſaith the *Prophet*, &c. Pſal. lxxiii. 13, 14, 22. But when they come to themſelves, and learn by GOD's Word and Spirit, that it is not outward proſperity will make *wicked men* happy, neither is it outward affliction that can make *a good man* miſerable.

Then they will neither *applaud*, nor *envy* the proſperity of the wicked, nor yet *miſconſtrue*, nor *repine* at their own afflictions. For they learn, that *no man can know God's love or hatred by any outward thing*, that *doth befall the ſons of men in this life*, Eccleſ. ix. 1.

They learn, that God doth often ſmile on his *enemies*, and that he doth often frown upon, is angry with, and doth correct thoſe whom he *dearly loveth*, even as a *Father* doth his Children, Prov. iii. 12. Rev. iii. 19.

They learn by the Word likewiſe, that God hath excellent *ends* in all this, even in reſpect of them, and for their *good*; namely, for *trial* of their graces, for *prevention* of ſin, for to *remove* ſin, by bringing them to repentance, Rom. viii. 12. and that they might *be made partakers of his Holineſs*, Heb. xii. 10. Beſides, herein he doth much glorify himſelf, ſhewing that he is *wonderful in Counſel, excellent in Working:* cauſing the affliction to work for his *glory*, in his peoples *good*, Iſa. xxviii. 29. Yea, you may learn by your own experience, that the child of God in his infirmity and paſſion, when he is under the rod, may let go his *hold* of God; yet, that God, in his love and compaſſion towards his people, will *hold him faſt by his right-hand*, and *will* not leave him; but will *guide him with his Counſel*, until he *receive him into glory*, Pſal. lxxvii. 23, 24. This is God's method with his Children; wherefore none from hence hath

hath cauſe to queſtion *God's love*, but to conclude it rather.

(2.) Fears of the want of grace, on account of worldly proſperity.

There are others (and it may be the ſame, when the tide of affection is turned) becauſe they *proſper*, and are not *in trouble* as other men, do conceive that GOD doth not love them. For it is ſaid, *as many as he loveth, he doth rebuke and chaſten*, Rev. iii. 19. and he doth *chaſten every Son whom he receiveth*, Heb. xii. 6.

See, a fearful and doubtful heart will draw matter to feed its fears and doubts out of *any* thing. But know, *God* is a wiſe and good *Father*, he knoweth when to ſtrike, and when to hold his hands.

In theſe caſes, as follows, GOD doth not uſually *afflict* his children with his heavy rod.

Firſt, when they be *Infants*, Babes in Chriſt, or (if they be grown to years) when they be ſpiritually *weak* or ſick, and cannot bear correction; then, though they be froward, and deſerve ſtrokes, GOD doth forbear, and is inclined to pity rather.

Secondly, when they be *good Children*; that is, ſhew that they would pleaſe him, endeavouring to do what they are able, though it be with much imperfection; then GOD will not ſtrike, but *ſpareth them, as a Father ſpareth his only Son that ſerveth him*, Mal. iii. 17.

Thirdly, when forbearance of puniſhment, and when fruits and tokens of kindneſs will *re-*

claim his children from evil, and prove ſufficient *incentives* unto good; *God* in this caſe alſo, like a wiſe and loving Father, had rather draw them by the *cords of love*, then drive them with the *laſhes of his diſpleaſure*, Hoſea xi. 4. Thus you ſee God may love his Children, and not be always afflicting of them.

Well, do you *proſper?* Then take notice of GOD's goodneſs towards you with *thankſgiving*; ſtudy and endeavour therefore to be the more *obedient*. If you cannot, yet grieve becauſe you cannot be more thankful and more obedient. Then, becauſe *proſperity* hath made you better, or at leaſt *to deſire* to be better, hence you may aſſure yourſelves, that your *proſperity* is not given you in wrath, but *in love*. But take heed, (quarrel not with GOD) becauſe he *forbeareth* to afflict you; either make this uſe, that you be good, and amend without blows; or elſe be ſure the more is behind.

(3.) Doubts of GOD's love, from inward horrors, and diſtreſſes of mind, removed.

As the fore-mentioned did queſtion GOD's love, from conſiderations taken from their *outward* conditions; ſo there are very many, beſides what they conclude from outward croſſes, conclude alſo from their inward *horrors* and *diſtreſſes* of Conſcience, and from their intolerable perplexities of ſoul, that GOD doth not love them: they think that their diſtreſs is other, or greater than the affliction of any of GOD's Children;

dren; therefore they want peace, fearing that God doth *not love* them.

Thoſe to whom God doth bear ſpecial love, may be ſo far perplexed with *inward* and *ſtrange* terrors and diſcomforts, that they may think themſelves to be *forſaken* of God. Thus *David* complaineth, *will the Lord caſt off for ever?* And *will he be favourable no more?* Pſal. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9. Yea, not only *David*, but *Chriſt Jeſus* himſelf, and his *Church*, did in their ſenſe and feeling, take themſelves to be *forſaken* of *God*; Mat. xxvii. 46. Cant. v. 6. Iſa. xlxi 14. yet none that *are* wiſe will ſay, that theſe were deſtitute of *God's love*, or were ever *quite forſaken*, though never ſo much *perplexed and caſt down*; though, in their own feeling and ſenſe, they, in the agony of their ſpirits, did thus think or ſpeak, 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

God hath moſt *holy and bleſſed ends*, why that many times he doth lead and leave his Children in ſuch ſtraits, that they are altogether *without ſenſe* of his love.

Firſt, it may be a juſt *correction* of them, for their not ſhewing love to God, and becauſe they do in part *forſake* him by their ſins This is therefore to humble them, and to make them know themſelves, and to bring them to repentance. God may be pacified towards them in the *main*, yet for a time ſhew them no countenance; as David, though his anger was appeaſed towards *Abſalom*, yet for a time he would not let him *ſee* his love, for he would not let

him come in his ſight; that *Abſalom* might be more humbled, and might the more deteſt his ſin, 2 Sam. xiv. 24.

Secondly, GOD exerciſeth his beloved ones with many fears, horrors, and doubts, to *prevent* that *ſpiritual pride* which elſe would be in them, and that *ſelf-ſufficiency* which elſe they would conceive to be in themſelves; if they ſhould always have ſenſe of inward and ſpritual comforts, and ſhould not ſometime have *pricks in the fleſh, and buffetings of Satan*, they would be *exalted above meaſure*, and would be ſomething in themſelves in their own opinion, 2 Cor. xii. 7. But when there is ſuch difficulty in *getting*, and *keeping* of grace and comfort, and when they find what need they have of both, and how neither can be had, but from *God*, in and by *Chriſt*, it will make them empty themſelves of *all things* in themſelves, that they may be *ſomething* in *Chriſt*. And then, when they have grace and comfort, they will acknowledge themſelves to be *beholden to* GOD for the ſame.

Thirdly, GOD doth with-hold from his Children, the ſenſe of his favour, to *try the ſincerity and truth of their ſole dependance on him*; trying, whether becauſe GOD ſeemeth to forſake *them*, they will forſake *him*; whether, like King *Joram*, they will ſay, *why ſhall they wait upon God any longer?* And, whether they will with *Saul*, betake them to *unlawful* means of help, 2 Kings vi. 33. 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. Or whether on the other ſide, they will ſay with *Job* and *David*, *though*

though God kill us, or *forget* us, *yet we will truſt in him, hope in him, and praiſe him*, Job xiii. 15. Pſal. xlii. 9, 11. who they are perſwaded is, and will ſhew himſelf to be the *health of their countenance and their God.* GOD uſeth to leave his Children, as, in another caſe, he left *Hezekiah*, to *try them, and to know what is in their hearts*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

Fourthly, GOD withdraweth himſelf for a time, that they may learn to *eſteem more highly of his favour*, and to deſire it more, when by the *want* of it, they find by experience, what an *Hell it is to be without it.* And that they may be more *thankful* for it, and be more *careful* (by ſtudying to pleaſe GOD) for *to keep it when they have it.* This holy uſe, *David* and the *Church* made of GOD's forſaking them (as they thought) for a time, Pſal. lxxx. 18, 19. Cant. iii. 2, 5. 6, 8. ii. 7. viii. 4. It made them ſeek more diligently after GOD, promiſing that if he would *turn to them, they would not go back from him*; reſolving by his grace to cleave more cloſely unto him.

But, know this to your comfort, when GOD doth moſt withdraw himſelf and forſake you, it is but *in part*, in *appearance* only, and but *for a time.* He may, for the cauſe before mentioned, turn away his face, and forbear to ſhew his *loving Countenance*; but he will not take his *loving kindneſs utterly from you, nor ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail*, Pſal. lxxxix. 32, 33, 34. What GOD ſaid to his afflicted Church, that he ſaith to every

every afflicted member thereof. *For a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the* LORD *thy Redeemer*, Iſa. liv. 7, 8. Hence it is that in your greateſt extremities, your faith and hope ſhall *ſecretly* (though you feel not their working) preſerve you from utter deſpair. As it was with *David*, and with our *bleſſed Saviour*, Pſal. xxi. 1. who although theſe words of theirs to GOD, *Why haſt thou forſaken me*, argueth *fear*, and *want of ſenſe of God's love*, yet theſe words, *My God, my God*, doth argue a ſecret *alliance* and *hope*, Mat. xxvii. 46.

(4.) Doubts of GOD's love on account of extraordinary Afflictions, removed.

And whereas you ſay, that no man's grief or troubles are *like yours*, partly by reaſon of outward afflictions, and partly by inward temptations and diſtreſſes, (give me leave to deal plainly with you) it is a *fooliſh* and a *falſe ſpeech*. Talk with a thouſand thus troubled, they will all ſay thus, *No man's caſe was ever as mine is*, Nor ſo bad; will any that have but common ſenſe, think this to be true? Moſt of theſe muſt needs be deceived. You feel *your own* diſtreſs, but you cannot fully know what *another* feeleth.

If you would rightly look into the diſtreſſes of *others*, who were better than yourſelves, as they are recorded in *Scripture*, you would not think thus. As for *outward* afflictions, upon whom

whom did GOD ever lay his hand more heavy than on his *ſervant Job*? Job. i. Had not St. *Paul* alſo his *trouble without, of all ſorts*, and *terrors within, &c.* 2 Cor. xi. 23—33. And, if you conſider ſorrows, fears, and diſtreſſes of all ſorts, were yours ſuch as *David's* were, or more than his? I pray what mean theſe, and many more ſuch ſpeeches? *My bones are vexed, my ſoul is vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long? I am weary with my groaning, mine eye is conſumed with grief, it waxeth old*, Pſal. iv. 2, 3, 6, 7. *Why ſtandeſt thou afar off? Why hideſt thou thyſelf in time of trouble?* Pſal. x. 1. *How long wilt thou forget me Lord; for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Pſal. xxxi. 1. *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midſt of my bowels. My ſtrength is dried up like a potſhread; my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou haſt brought me to the duſt of death*, Pſal. xxii. 14, 15. *My bones wax old through my roaring all the day. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me*, Pſal. xxxii. 3, 4. *There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin. Mine iniquities*, that is, the puniſhment of mine iniquities, *are gone over my head, they are too heavy for me*, Pſal. xxxviii. 3, 4. Thus and much more, doth he complain; *I am weary of my crying, my throat is dry. Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God*, Pſal. lxix. 3. So *Aſaph, My ſore ran, and ceaſed not, my ſoul refuſed to be comforted*, Pſal. lxxvii. 2.

What

What think you now? Were not *Job*, *Paul*, and *David*, in GOD's love and favour, notwithſtanding all this? It may be you will reply, howſoever the *matter* of their trouble might be greater than yours, yet they could *remember God*, they could *pray* to him, they had *faith and confidence in God* in their diſtreſſes, all which you want; therefore herein your caſe is *worſe* than theirs.

Conſider yourſelves well, (I ſpeak only to you that are truly humbled for ſin) and it is to be hoped that in ſome meaſure you ſhall find the *like grace*, faith and confidence *in you*, as was in them; if you ſee it not, be grieved for the want thereof; endeavour to do as you ſay they did in their diſtreſſes, only be not diſcouraged, and all ſhall be well. But take notice, I pray you, that ſometimes *David* neither *did*, *nor could pray*, (as he conceived of his own *prayer*) any otherwiſe than in *roaring*, *and complaining*, at which time, he ſaith he *kept ſilence*, Pſal. xxxii. 3. But when he could *confeſs his ſins and pray*, then he had ſome apprehenſion that GOD had forgiven him his ſin, Pſal. xxxii. 5. And for all *Aſaph*'s remembring of GOD, yet even then he was *troubled, and his ſpirit was over-whelmed, and he ſaith, his ſoul refuſed comfort*, Pſal. lxxvii. 2, 3. and *David* ſaith unto GOD, *when wilt thou comfort me?* Pſal. cxix. 82. I grant it was his fault, yet it was ſuch a fault as was incident to one beloved of GOD. Moreover, I deny not, but that *Job* and *David* had faith and hope in GOD; but

but theſe graces in them were oftentimes *over-clouded* with unbelief and diſtruſt; as doth appear in their many paſſionate diſtempers; at which times, their faith appeared to others in their good ſpeeches and actions, rather than to themſelves. And the *Prophet* confeſſeth, that thoſe his faithleſs complaints were *in his haſt*, and *from his infirmities*, Pſal. xxxi. 22. lxxvii. 10.

How ſay you now? Is it not thus with you? Are you not like others of *God's children?* Off and on, up and down, you would pray and cannot, you would believe, but (as you think) cannot, you would have comfort but cannot feel it. Only you feel a ſecret ſupport now and then; and now and then, you ſee and feel a glimps of GOD's light and comfort; for which you muſt be *thankful*, which you muſt *cheriſh* by all means, and with which you muſt reſt *contented*, waiting until GOD give you more.

You ſhould know and conſider, that this is an old device of *Satan*, to make you believe that your caſe is *worſe*, or at leaſt much *different* from the caſe of any others, becauſe, he knoweth, that while he fixeth this upon your mind, no *common* remedy, which did cure and comfort others, can cure and comfort *you*. For you will ſtill aſk, was ever any as I am? And if *God's Miniſters* and people cannot ſay yea; and, that ſuch an inſtruction, and ſuch a promiſe in the *Word* did help him; then you conclude that you are *incurable*.

But

But laſt of all, let it be ſuppoſed that your caſe *is worſe* than any bodies elſe, is there not a ſovereign *Balm in God's Word*, Jer. viii. 21. a *Catholicon* (or univerſal remedy) that will heal *all* ſpiritual diſeaſes? GOD's Word is like himſelf, to a believer, an *Omnipotent Word*, Mark ix. 23. Is any thing *too hard for the LORD?* Gen. xviii. 14. Neither is there any ſpiritual diſeaſe *too hard for his Word and Spirit to cure.* When *Chriſt* healed the people with his Word, did it not heal even ſuch which were *never known* to be cured before?

They made no queſtion, whether he cured the *fame* before. Indeed *Martha* failed in this, for ſhe ſaid of her brother *Lazarus* being dead, *LORD he ſtinketh*, for *he hath been dead four days*; ſhe conceived her brother's caſe to be deſperate, and that none in his ſtate could be reſtored to life, John xi. 39, 40. But *Chriſt blamed her for want of faith*; and by his Word he did as eaſily raiſe *Lazarus* from being dead ſo long, as he did cure *Peter's wife's mother* ſick but of an ague, Mark i. 31.

It is not *greatneſs of any man's diſtreſs* whatſoever, that can hinder from help and comfort, but only as then in *curing mens bodies*, ſo now in curing and comforting mens ſouls, nothing hinders the cure but the *greatneſs of unbelief* in the party to be cured, Mark vi. 5, 6. for *all things are poſſible to him that believeth*, Mark ix. 23.

You will yet reply; indeed here lieth the difficulty, in *unbelief*.

Well,

Well, be it ſo. If *unbelief* be your diſeaſe, and trouble, do you think *that God cannot cure you of unbelief* as well as of any other ſin? But know that if with the poor man in the *Goſpel*, you feel your unbelief, and complain of it, and confeſs it unto GOD, ſaying, *Lord I* have cauſe to believe, Mark ix. 24. *Lord I do, I would believe, help thou my unbelief*; if you alſo will *wait* until GOD give you power to believe, and to enjoy *comfort in believing*, *for*, *faith maketh no haſte*; this is both to *believe in truth*, and is a *certain means* to increaſe in believing.

Wherefore let not *Satan*, nor yet a *fearful heart*, make you to judge your caſe to be *deſperate, and remedileſs*, either in reſpect of GOD's *power*, or *will*, though you are yet in *diſtreſs*, and feel in you much *fear* and *unbelief*. Seek to GOD, and with patience *wait* the good time of deliverance, and comfort; and in due time, you ſhall have *help* and *comfort*, as well as others.

(5.) Doubts of GOD's love, becauſe prayers are not anſwered, removed.

There are yet ſome, that fear GOD doth not love them, becauſe they have prayed often and much; but GOD hath *rejected* their prayers, and *not anſwered* them.

There are many juſt cauſes, why *God* may reject, or at leaſt not grant your *prayers*; and yet may love your *perſons*.

For firſt, it may be you *ask amiſs*, either aſking things *unlawful*, or aſking things *inconvenient* for the preſent, or in aſking to have good things

things temporal, or ſpiritual, in that *quantity* and *degree*, which GOD doth not ſee fit for you as yet; or you aſk good things to an ill end, as to *ſatisfy ſome luſt*, as pride, voluptuouſneſs, covetouſneſs, &c. or laſtly (though you failed in neither of the former,) yet you failed in this, you were *doubtful*, *you did not aſk in faith*, you did not *believe* you ſhould have the things ſo aſked, James iv. 3. Whoſoever thus faileth in aſking, *let them not think to receive any thing* in favour *from the LORD*, James i. 6, 7. And it is a fruit of GOD's love, when he doth *not anſwer* prayers ſo made; for it will cauſe you to ſeek him, and to pray to him in a *better* manner, that you may be heard.

Secondly, GOD doth many times in love and mercy *hear* his childrens prayers, when they think he *doth not*. GOD heareth prayers many ways, you muſt obſerve this, elſe you will judge that he doth not hear your prayers, when yet indeed he doth. Sometimes, yea, always when it is good for you, he giveth the *very thing* which you pray for. Sometimes he giveth not that thing which you aſk; but ſomething *much better*. As, when you aſk *earthly and temporal good things*, he granteth them not, but inſtead thereof giveth you things *ſpiritual and eternal*, likewiſe when you aſk grace in ſome *ſpecial degree*, ſuch as joy, or comfort in GOD, or the like, it may pleaſe him not to let it appear that he giveth the ſame unto you; but inſtead thereof he doth *enlarge your deſires*, and he giveth *humility*, and *patience*,

to

to wait his leiſure, which will do you more good than that which you prayed for. So likewiſe when you pray that GOD would free you from ſuch, or ſuch a *temptation*; GOD doth not always rid and eaſe you of it; but he inſtead thereof giveth you *ſtrength* to withſtand it, and keepeth you, that you are not overcome by it; thus *Chriſt* was heard in that which he feared, Heb. v. 7. ſo he ſaid to the *Apoſtle*, *My grace is ſufficient for thee?* Which is better than to have your particular requeſt, 2 Cor. xii. 9. For now GOD's power is ſeen in your weakneſs, and GOD hath the glory of it; and you hereby have experience of GOD's power, which experience is of excellent uſe.

Likewiſe you may deſire to have ſuch, or ſuch a *croſs* or *affliction* removed; yet GOD may ſuffer the croſs to remain for a time, but he giveth you *ſtrength* and *patience* to bear it; wiſdom and grace to be leſs earthly, and more heavenly minded by reaſon of it. There was never any, that, with an holy and humble heart, made lawful requeſts according to the will of Chriſt, believing he ſhould be heard; but, though he were a man of many failings in himſelf, and did diſcover many weakneſſes in his prayer, *was heard* in that he prayed, either in what he *asked of God*, or in what he *ſhould rather have asked*; either in the very thing, or in a better.

I would have you therefore leave objecting, and queſtioning whether GOD *loves* you; conſider this; hath he not loved you, *that hath given his*

his only begotten Son for you, and to you, John iii. 16. *who hath waſhed you with his blood,* Rev. i. 5. *having given him to die for your ſins, and to riſe again for your juſtification,* Rom. iv. 25. and hath hereby tranſlated you into the kingdom of his dear Son, having alſo *given unto you to believe in his Name,* Phil. i. 20. hereby making you his children, *inheritors with the Saints in light,* John i. 12. What greater ſign can there be of the love of GOD towards you? And what better evidence can you have of GOD's love in juſtifying of you, than the *evidence of your faith,* Heb. xi. 1. whereby you are *juſtified?* Rom. iii. 28.

(6.) A removal of falſe fears, from the deficiency or weakneſs of faith.

All men will grant, that if they were ſure that they had *faith, they ſhould not doubt of their juſtification,* nor of GOD's love to them in Chriſt. But many doubt that they have *no faith,* or if they have any, it is ſo *little,* that it cannot be ſufficient to carry them through all oppoſitions to the end, unto ſalvation.

Firſt, if you have *any faith,* though no more than as a *grain of Muſtard-ſeed,* you ſhould not fear your final eſtate, nor yet doubt of GOD's love, for it is not the *great quantity* and meaſure of faith that ſaveth; but the *excellent property* and uſe of faith, though never ſo ſmall: Luke xvii. 6. For a man is not ſaved by the *worth of his faith, by which he believeth*; but by the *worth of Chriſt, the perſon on whom he believeth.* Now the *leaſt* true faith, doth apprehend Chriſt *entirely,*

tirely, to all the purpoſes of ſalvation; even as a little hand may hold a Jewel of infinite worth as well, though not ſo ſtrongly, as a bigger. The leaſt infant is as *truly* a man, as ſoon as ever it is endued with a reaſonable ſoul, as afterward, when it is able to ſhew forth the operations of it, though not ſo ſtrong a man: even ſo it is in the ſtate of Regeneration. Now you ſhould conſider that GOD hath *Babes in Chriſt*, as well as *old men*, 1 John ii. 12. *feeble minded*, as well as *ſtrong*; *ſick* children as well as *healthy*, in his family, 1 Theſ. v. 14. Rom. xiv. 1. xv. 1. And thoſe that have leaſt ſtrength and are weakeſt, of whom the *holy Ghoſt* ſaith, they have a *little ſtrength* in compariſon, yet they have ſo much as (through GOD) will enable them in the time of greateſt trials, *to keep God's Word, and that they ſhall not deny Chriſt's Name*, Rev. iii. 8. Alſo know, *God* like a *tender Father*, doth not caſt off ſuch as are little, feeble, and weak, but hath given ſpecial charge concerning the *cheriſhing*, *ſupporting*, *and comforting* of theſe more than others, 1 Theſ. v. 14. And *Chriſt Jeſus will confirm and increaſe*, and *not quench the leaſt ſpark of faith*, Mat. xii. 20.

This which I have ſaid in commendation of *little faith*, is only to keep him that hath no more from deſpair. Let none hereby pleaſe or content himſelf with his little faith, *not ſtriving* to grow, and be ſtrong in faith. If he do, it is to be feared that he hath *none* at all; or if he have, yet he muſt know that he will have much

to

to do to live, when he hath no more than can keep life and ſoul together, and his life will be very unprofitable, and uncomfortable, in compariſon of him that hath a ſtrong faith.

§. I. *Reaſons why Chriſtians think they have no Faith, conſidered.*

BUT you will ſay, you are (1.) ſo *full of fears and doubtings*, (2.) you are ſo *fearful to die*, and to hear of coming to *judgment*, and (3.) you cannot *feel* that you have faith, you cannot *feel* joy and comfort in believing, wherefore you fear you have no faith.

Firſt, if you (having ſo ſure a word and promiſe) do yet *doubt* and *fear* ſo much as you ſay, it is your great ſin, and I muſt blame you now, in our Savior's name, as he did his Diſciples then, ſaying, *Why are you fearful*, Mat. viii, 26. *why are ye doubtful, O ye of little faith?* Mat. xiv. 31. But (to your reformation and comfort) obſerve it, he doth not argue them to be of *no faith*, but only of *little faith*, ſaying, O ye of *little faith*. Thus you ſee that ſome fears and doubtings do not argue *no* faith.

Secondly, Concerning fear of death and judgment, *ſome fear* doth not exclude *all faith*. Many out of their natural conſtitution are more fearful of death than others. Yea, *pure nature* will ſtartle and ſhrink to think of the ſeparation of two ſo near, ſo ancient, and *ſuch dear friends* as the ſoul and body have been. Good men,

ſuch

ſuch as *David*, and *Hezekiah*, have ſhewed their *unwillingneſs* to die. And many upon a miſtake, conceiving the pangs and pains of death *in the parting* of the ſoul and body to be moſt torturous, and unſufferable, are afraid to die. Whereas unto many, the nearer they are to their end, the *leſs* is their extremity of pain; and very many go away in a quiet ſwoon, *without pain.*

And as for being moved with ſome fear, at the thought of the day of *judgment*; who can think of that *great appearance*, before ſo glorious a *Majeſty*, (ſuch as *Chriſt* ſhall appear in) Mat. xvi. 27. *to anſwer for all the things he hath done in his body*, without trembling? 2 Cor. v. 10, 11. The *Apoſtle* calleth the thoughts thereof, the *terrors of the Lord.* Indeed to be *perplexed* with the thoughts of the one or other, *argueth imperfection* of faith and hope, but *not an utter abſence* of either.

You have other and better things to do in this caſe, than to make ſuch dangerous concluſions, *viz.* that you have *no* faith, &c. upon ſuch weak grounds. You ſhould rather when you feel this over-fearfulneſs to die, and come to Judgment, labour to *find out* the ground of your error, and ſtudy and endeavour to *reform* it.

Unwillingneſs to die, may proceed from theſe cauſes.

Firſt, From too *high an eſtimation*, and *too great a love to earthly things* of ſome kind or other; which maketh you afraid, and unwilling to part with them.

Secondly,

Secondly, You may be unwilling to die, becauſe of *ignorance of the ſuperabundant and inconceivable excellencies of the happineſs of Saints departed*, which if you knew, you would be willing.

Thirdly, Fear of death, and coming to Judgment, doth (for the moſt part) riſe, *from a conſcience fearful of the ſentence of condemnation*, being without aſſurance, that when they die they ſhall go to heaven.

Wherefore if you would be free from troubleſome fear of death and Judgment. Learn (1.) to *think meanly and baſely of the world*, in compariſon of thoſe better things, provided for them that love GOD, and uſe all the things of the world accordingly, (without *ſetting your heart upon them,*) Pſal. lxii. 10. *as if you uſed them not*, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. (2.) While you live here on earth, take yourſelves aſide often in your thoughts from the cares and buſineſs of the world, and *enter into heaven, and contemplate deeply the joys thereof.* (3) *Give all diligence to make your calling and election*, and right unto heaven, *ſure unto yourſelves*, 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. but let me give you this needful item, that you be *willing and ready* to judge it to be ſure, when it is ſure, and when you have cauſe ſo to judge. Let your care be only (through faith in Chriſt Jeſus) to *live well*, joining unto faith, virtue, &c. and you cannot but *die well*, 2 Pet. i. 5. Death, at firſt appearance, like a *Serpent*, ſeemeth terrible; but by faith, you may ſee this Serpent's *ſting* taken

taken out, which when you conſider, you may for your refreſhment, receive it into your boſom. *The ſting of death is ſin*, the ſtrength of *ſin* is the *Law*, but the *Law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt hath freed you from the law of ſin and of death*, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. Rom. viii. 2. I confeſs that when you ſee this *pale horſe* death approaching, it may cauſe nature to ſhrink, but when you conſider that his errant is to carry you with ſpeed unto your *deſired home*, unto a ſtate of glory, how can you but deſire he ſhould remove you out of this vale of miſery, that *mortality might be ſwallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. v. 4.

If you would do this in earneſt, you would be ſo far from *fear* of death, that you would, if it were put to your choice, with the *Apoſtle chooſe to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is the beſt of all*, Phil. i. 2, 3. and ſo far from fearing the *day of Judgment*, that you would love and *long for Chriſt's appearing*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. *waiting* with patience and chearfulneſs, *when your change ſhall be*, Job xiv. 14. Endeavour to follow theſe directions; then, if you cannot prevent theſe fears, and conquer them as you would, yet be not diſcouraged, for *fears* and *doubts* in this kind, do flow many times from *ſtrength of temptation*, more than from *weakneſs of Faith*.

Moreover, what if you cannot attain to ſo high a pitch in your faith as St. *Paul* had, are you ſo *ambitious*, that no other degrees of faith

ſhall ſatisfy you? Or are you ſo *fooliſh*, as thence to conclude that you have *no* faith.

Thirdly, Whereas you ſay, you are *without feeling*, therefore you fear you have *no faith*. I acknowledge that *want of a feeling ſenſe of God's favour*, is that which doth more trouble God's tender hearted Children, and make them more doubt of *God's love*, and of *their juſtification*, than any thing elſe; whereas I know nothing that giveth them *leſs* cauſe.

For firſt, *What do you mean by feeling?* If you mean the *enjoyment of the things promiſed, and hoped for, by inward ſenſe*; This is to overthrow the nature, and put an end to the uſe of faith and hope. For *Faith is the ſubſtance of things* hoped for, and the *evidence* of things not ſeen, Heb. xi. 1. And the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *Hope that is* ſeen, *is not hope*, Rom. viii. 24. Indeed *faith* giveth a *preſent being* of the thing promiſed to the believer, but it is a being, not in ſenſe, but in hope and aſſured expectation of the thing promiſed: Wherefore the *Apoſtle* ſpeaking of our ſpiritual converſation on earth, ſaith, *We walk by faith, not by ſight*, 2 Cor. v. 7. Theſe two; faith and feeling are *oppoſite* one to the other in this ſenſe; For *when we ſhall live by ſight, and feeling*, then, we ſhall ceaſe *to live by faith.*

§. II. *The Difference between Faith and Aſſurance.*

SECONDLY, If by *feeling* you mean, *a joyous and comfortable aſſurance that you are in God's*

God's favour, and that you ſhall be ſaved, and therefore becauſe you want this joyous *aſſurance*, you think you have *no Faith*, you muſt know this is a falſe concluſion.

For *Faith*, whereby you are ſaved and brought into a ſtate of grace; and this *comfortable aſſurance* that you are in a ſtate of grace and ſhall be ſaved, *differ* much from each other. It is true, *Aſſurance* is an effect of *faith*. Yet it is not *inſeperable* from the very *being* of faith, at all times. For you may have *ſaving Faith*, yet at ſometime be without the *comfortable aſſurance* of Salvation.

To believe in Chriſt to Salvation *is one thing*, and to know aſſuredly that you ſhall be ſaved is *another*. For *Faith* is a *direct act* of the reaſonable ſoul, receiving Chriſt, and Salvation offered by GOD with him. *Aſſurance* riſeth from a *reflect act* of the ſoul, namely, when the ſoul by ſelf enquiry, and the help of GOD's ſpirit, can witneſs that it hath the afore-mentioned grace of faith, whereby it can ſay, *I know that I believe in Chriſt Jeſus*; and *I know that the promiſes of the Goſpel belong unto me*. The holy Scriptures are written for both theſe ends, that *firſt* Faith, *and then* aſſurance of faith and hope ſhould be wrought in men. *Theſe things are written*, ſaith St. *John* in his Goſpel, *that you may believe, that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name*, John xx. 31. Again, *theſe things have I written* (ſaith the ſame *Apoſtle* in his *Epiſtles*) *to you that believe on the name of the Son of GOD*; that ye may know

that you have eternal life, and that you may believe, that is, continue to believe, and encreaſe in believing *on the name of the Son of God*, chap. v. 15.

A man is *ſaved* by *faith*, but hath *comfort* in hope of Salvation by *Aſſurance*; ſo that the *being of ſpiritual life*, in reſpect of us, doth ſubſiſt *in Faith*, not in *Aſſurance* and *Feeling*. And that is the ſtrongeſt and moſt approved faith, which cleaveth to Chriſt and to his promiſes, and reſteth upon his truth and faithfulneſs, without the help of *feeling*. For, although, *Aſſurance* giveth unto us a more evident certainty of our good eſtate, yet *Faith*, even without this, will certainly preſerve us in this good eſtate, whether we be aſſured or not.

Hence it is that although reaſon, as it is now corrupt will ſtill be *objecting*, and will be ſatisfied with nothing but what it may know by *ſenſe*, John iii. 4. yet *Faith*, *even above and againſt* ſenſe, and all natural reaſoning, Rom. iv. 19, 20. from a reverence to GOD's command, who *biddeth* to believe and truſt in him, and a perſwaſion of the *truth* and *goodneſs* of the promiſes, *will give credit unto, and reſt upon the bare, naked divine witneſs of the Word of God, for his ſake that doth ſpeak it*, Heb. xi. 8, 11.

Secondly, there is a *certainty of Evidence*; namely, when the thing believed is not only ſaid to be true and good, but a man doth find it ſo to be by *ſenſe and experience*, and is ſo *evident* to man's reaſon, convincing it by force of *Argument*, taken from the Cauſes, Effects, Properties,

ties, Signs, and the like, that it hath nothing to object againſt the thing propoſed to be believed. The certainty of *Adherence*, is the certainty of *Faith*. The certainty of *Evidence*, is the certainty of *Aſſurance*.

This certainty of *Aſſurance* and evidence is of excellent uſe, for it maketh the Chriſtian *fruitful in good works*, and doth fill him full of joy and comfort: therefore it muſt by all means be *ſought after*, yet, it is not of itſelf ſo ſtrong, nor ſo conſtant, nor ſo infallible as the certainty of *Faith* and *Adherence* is, 2 Pet. i. 8, 10. For ſenſe and reaſon ſince the fall (even in the regenerate) are *weak*, *variable*, and their concluſions are not *ſo certain*, as thoſe of pure Faith; becauſe *Faith* buildeth only upon *Divine Teſtimony*, concluding without reaſoning or diſputing, yea, many times againſt reaſoning, Rom. iv. 18. Heb. xi. 11.

So that notwithſtanding the excellent, and needful uſe of *Aſſurance*, it is *Faith* and Adherence to Chriſt and his promiſes, which even in fears and doubts, muſt be the *Cable* we muſt hold by, leaſt we make ſhipwreck of all, when we are aſſaulted with our greateſt temptations; for then many times our *Aſſurance* leaveth us to the mercy of the Winds and Seas, as Mariners ſpeak. If you have *Faith*, though you have *little or no feeling*, your *Salvation* is yet ſure in truth, though not in your own apprehenſion. When *both* can be had it is beſt, for then you gain moſt ſtrength, and moſt comfort; giving you

chearfulneſs in all your troubles; but the *power* and *grace* of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and faith in his *naked word* and *promiſe*, is that to which you muſt truſt.

See this in the *examples* of moſt faithful men; for when they have been put to it, it was this that upheld them, and in this was their *faith commended*. *Abraham* againſt all preſent ſenſe and reaſon, even *againſt hope, believed in hope*, both in the matter of receiving a ſon, and in going about to offer him again unto GOD in *Sacrifice*. He denied ſenſe and reaſon, he *conſidered not the unlikelihoods, and ſeeming impoſſibilities in the judgment of reaſon*, that ever he ſhould have a ſeed, he being *old*, and *Sarah* being *old and barren*, or having a ſeed, that he ſhould be ſaved by that ſeed, ſince he was to *kill him in Sacrifice*, Heb. xi. 17, 18, 19. He only *conſidered the Almighty Power, faithfulneſs and ſovereignty of him that had promiſed*, he knew it was his duty to *obey* and to *wait*, and ſo let all the matter concerning it reſt on *God*'s promiſe, Rom. iv. 18, 19, 20, 21. For this, his faith is commended, and he is ſaid to be *ſtrong in faith*, Rom. iv. 20.

Job, and *David*, or *Aſaph*, ſhewed moſt ſtrength of *Faith*, when they had *little or no feeling* of GOD's favour, but rather the contrary. *Job* had little feeling of GOD's favour, when for pain of body he ſaid, *wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth*, and in anguiſh of ſoul he ſaid, *wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and takeſt me for thine enemy*, Job xiii. 14, 24. Yet then this adherence

herence of faith, cauſed him to *cleave* unto GOD, and ſay in the ſame Chapter, *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*, ver. 15. When *David* ſaid to GOD, *Why haſt thou forgotten me?* Pſal. xlii. 9. His *Aſſurance was weak*; yet even then his *Faith* diſcovered itſelf, when he ſaith to his ſoul, *Why art thou diſquieted within me, Hope in God, who is the health of my countenance, and my God*, Pſal. xlii. 11. You ſee then that the excellency of *Faith* lieth not in your *feeling*, but, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh by experience, in *cleaving cloſe unto the promiſe*, and relying on GOD for it, upon his bare word, Pſal. lxxiii. 28. For he ſaith, *It is good for me to draw near to God, I have put my truſt in the Lord God*, this was that which ſecretly upheld him, and kept him in *poſſeſſion*, when his *Evidences*, and Aſſurance was to ſeek.

Wherefore, *Believe God's promiſes made to you in Chriſt, and reſt on him*; even when you want joy, and feeling comfort. For having *Faith*, you are *ſure* of *heaven*, though you be not ſo fully *aſſured* of it as you deſire. It will be your greateſt commendation, when you will be *dutyful* ſervants and children at GOD's Commandment, though you have not preſent *wages*, when you will take GOD's word for that. Thoſe are bad ſervants and children, which cannot go on chearfully in doing their *Maſter or Father's will*, except they may receive the promiſed wages, *in good part aforehand*, or *every day*; or except they may have *a good part of the promiſed inheritance*

preſently, and in hand. *Feeling of comfort* is part of a *Chriſtian's wages* and inheritance, (to be received at the good pleaſure of GOD, that freely giveth it,) rather than a Chriſtian duty. To comfort and ſtay ourſelves on GOD in diſtreſs, is a *duty*, but this joyful ſenſe and feeling of GOD's favour, is a *gracious favour of God towards* us, not a *duty of ours* toward *God*. It argues too much *diſtruſt* in GOD, and too much *ſelf-reſpect*, when we have no heart to go about his work, except we be full of *feeling* of his favour. He is the beſt child, or ſervant, that will *obey* out of love, duty, and conſcience; and will *truſt* on GOD, and *wait* on him for his wages and recompence.

Thirdly, when you ſay, you cannot *feel*, that you have faith or hope, *you mean*, as indeed many good ſouls do, *you cannot find and perceive, that theſe graces be in you in truth*, which, if you did, you would not doubt of your Salvation: My anſwer is, if faith and hope be in you, then if you would judiciouſly enquire into yourſelves, and *feel for them*, you may find and *feel them*, and know that you have them; for as certainly, as he that *ſeeth bodily*, may know that he ſeeth; ſo he that hath the *ſpiritual ſight of Faith*, may know that he hath Faith. Wherefore *try and feel for your Faith*, and you ſhall find, whether it be in you, yea or no.

§. III.

§. III. *The Nature and Properties of ſaving Faith.*

FOR this cauſe, (1.) Try whether you ever had the *neceſſary Preparatives*, which ordinarily make way for the ſeed of *Faith* to take root in the ſoul. (2.) Conſider the *nature* of ſaving Faith, and whether it hath wrought in you accordingly. (3.) Conſider ſome conſequents and *certain effects* thereof.

Firſt, concerning the *preparatives* to faith. Hath the *Law* ſhut you up, in your own apprehenſion, *under the curſe*, ſo that you have been afraid of Hell? And hath the Spirit alſo convinced you of ſin by the *Goſpel*, to the wounding of your conſcience, and to the working of true humiliation, cauſing the heart to relent, and to deſire to know how to be ſaved? and if after this you have *denyed* yourſelf, as to your own wiſdom and will, power and goodneſs, and received and reſted on Chriſt *alone* for Salvation, according to the nature of *true Faith*, as followeth, then you have Faith.

If you doubt you were never ſufficiently *humbled*, then read Chap. 16. Sect. 6.

Secondly, Conſider rightly the *nature* and *proper acts* of Faith, leaſt you conceive that to be *faith* which is not, and that to be *no faith* which is.

You may know wherein *true ſaving Faith* conſiſts, by this which followeth. Whereas (man being *fallen into a ſtate of condemnation* by reaſon

of ſin, thereby *breaking the Commandment of works*) it pleaſed GOD to ordain a *new Covenant*, the *Covenant of Grace*, eſtabliſhing it in his only *Son Chriſt Jeſus*, expreſſing the full tenor of this his *Covenant* in the *Goſpel*, wherein he maketh a gracious and free offer of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, in whom this Covenant is eſtabliſhed; and with him the *Covenant itſelf*, with all its unſpeakable bleſſings, unto man; now *when a man burdened with his ſin, underſtanding this offer, giveth credit, and aſſenteth thereunto becauſe it* is true, *and approveth it, and conſenteth to it, both becauſe it is* good *for him to embrace it; and becauſe it is the* Will *and* Commandment *of God, that he ſhould conſent for his part, and truſt to it; when* therefore *a man receiveth Chriſt Jeſus thus offered, together with the whole Covenant in all its duties and priviledges, ſo far as he underſtandeth it; reſolving to* reſt on *that part of the Covenant made and promiſed on God's part; and to ſtand to every branch of the Covenant, to be performed on his part*; thus to *embrace the Covenant of Grace*, and *to receive Chriſt*, in whom *it is* confirmed, *is to believe.*

This *offer of Chriſt*, and the *receiving him by faith*, may clearly be expreſſed by an *offer of peace, and favour, made by a King unto a Woman, that is a rebellious ſubject*; by making offer of a *marriage* between *her* and *his only Son*, the heir apparent to the Crown, who, to make way to this match, undertakes, by his Father's appointment, to make full *ſatisfaction to his Father's juſtice* in her behalf, and to make her every way

fit

fit to be daughter to a King. And for effecting this match between them, the *Son*, with the conſent and appointment of his *Father*, ſendeth his *chief ſervants* a woeing to this unworthy woman; making *offer* of marriage in their Maſter's behalf, with the cleareſt proofs of their Maſter's *good-will* to her, and with the greateſt earneſtneſs and entreaties, to obtain *her good-will*, that may be. This woman at firſt being a *bond-woman* unto this King's mortal enemy, and being in love with baſe ſlaves like herſelf, companions in her rebellion, they haply *ſet light by* this offer; or if ſhe conſider well of it, ſhe may doubt *of the truth* of this offer, the match being ſo unequal and ſo unlikely on her part; knowing herſelf to be ſo *baſe* and *unworthy*, ſhe may think the motion to be *too good* to be true; yet, if upon more adviſed thoughts, ſhe doth take notice of the *danger* ſhe is in while ſhe ſtandeth out againſt ſo powerful a King in her rebellion, and doth alſo ſee and *believe*, that the *King's Son* is *in earneſt* in his offer to reconcile her to his Father, and that he would indeed match with her; thereupon ſhe conſidereth alſo that it will be *good for her*, to forſake all others and take him.; and that eſpecially becauſe his *perſon* is ſo lovely, and every way worthy of her eſteem. Now when ſhe can bring herſelf to *believe* this, and *reſolve* thus, though ſhe cometh to it with ſome difficulty, yet *if ſhe giveth a true and hearty conſent to have him, and to forſake all other; and to take him as he is, to obey him as her Lord, and to take part with him*

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in all conditions, better or worſe, though ſhe come to this *reſolution* with much ado, then the match is as good as made between them; for hereupon follow the mutual embracing of, and intereſt in each to other.

The *application is eaſy throughout*; I will only *apply* ſo much as is for my purpoſe, to ſhew the nature of juſtifying Faith.

God offers his *only begotten Son Jeſus Chriſt*, yea, *Chriſt Jeſus*, by his *Miniſters*, offers himſelf in the *Goſpel* unto rebellious man, to match with him, 2 Cor. ii. 2. only on this *condition*, that *forſaking his kindred and father's houſe*, forſaking all that he is in himſelf, Pſal. xlv. 10. *he will receive him as his head, huſband, Lord*, and *Saviour*, Rom. vii. 4. Now when any man underſtandeth this motion, ſo far as to yeild *aſſent*, and *conſent to it*, and *to receive Chriſt, and cleave to him*; John i. 12. *then he believeth to Salvation*; then the match is made between *Chriſt* and that man; then they are betrothed, nay married, and *are no longer two, but are become one ſpirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17.

By all this you may ſee, that in *ſaving faith* there are theſe *two acts*.

Firſt, *An aſſent to the truth of the Goſpel*, not only believing in *general*, that there is a *Chriſt*, believing alſo what manner of *perſon* he is, and upon what condition he offered himſelf to man as a Saviour; but alſo *believing that this Chriſt graciouſly offereth his love and himſelf to the Chriſtian's ſelf in particular.*

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The ſecond act is, an *hearty approbation of this offer of Chriſt, with conſenting, and hearty embracing of it, as our own peculiar duty and priviledge*; reſolving to take him wholly, and fully as he is; accepting of him according to the full tenour of the *marriage covenant*, not only as a man's *Saviour*, to defend him from evil, and to ſave him and bring him to glory; but as his *head* to be ruled by him, as his *Lord and King to worſhip* and obey him; believing in him, not only as his *Prieſt* to ſatisfy, and to make interceſſion for him, but alſo as his *Prophet* to teach, and as his *King* to govern him; cleaving to him *in all eſtates*, Pſal. xlv. 11. taking part with him in *all the evils* that accompany the profeſſion of *Chriſt's* Name, as well *as in the good*, Luke ix. 23.

The *firſt* act is not enough to ſave any. The *ſecond* act cannot be without the former, where both theſe are, there is a right receiving of the *Goſpel*, there is *true faith*.

The principal matter lieth in the conſent and determination of the *will* in receiving of *Chriſt*; which that it may be without exception, know,

Firſt, it muſt be with an *adviſed and conſiderate will*; it muſt not be raſh, and on a ſudden, in your ignorance, before you well know what you do, Luke xiv. 28, 31. You muſt be well adviſed, and conſider well of the *perſon* to whom you give your conſent, that you know him, and that you know the *nature* of this ſpiritual union, and what you are *bound unto* by vertue of it, and

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what it will *coſt you*, if you give yourſelf to *Chriſt*, Luke xiv. 28.

Secondly, Your conſent muſt be with a *determinate* and *compleat will*; *with a preſent receiving him, even with all the heart*, Acts viii. 37. It muſt not be a *faint* conſent, in an indifferency whether you conſent or no; it muſt not be in a purpoſe, that you will receive him *hereafter*; but you muſt give your hand and heart to him for the preſent, elſe, it is no match.

Thirdly, Your conſent muſt be with *a free and ready will*; it muſt not be with a *forced* and conſtrained yielding, againſt the will; but (howſoever, it may be with much oppoſition and conflict, yet) you muſt ſo beat down the oppoſition, that when you give conſent, you bring your will to do it *readily* and *freely*, with thankful acknowledging yourſelves unſpeakably obliged to the Lord JESUS CHRIST all the days of your life, that he will vouchſafe to make you *ſuch an offer*.

When *conſent* is raſh, faint, and forced, this will not hold good any long time; but when your conſent is *adviſed*, *full*, and *free*, out of true love to CHRIST, as well as for your own benefit; the knot of marriage betwixt Chriſt and you is knit ſo faſt, that all the luſts of the fleſh, all the allurements of the world, and all the powers of Hell, ſhall not be able to break it.

By this which hath been ſaid concerning the *nature* of Faith, many, who thought they had *faith*, may ſee that yet they have *none*.

For

For they only believe in general that there is a *Chriſt*, and a *Saviour*, who offereth grace and ſalvation to mankind, and hereupon they preſume. This *general* faith is needfull, but that is not enough; it muſt be a perſwaſion of GOD's offer of Chriſt to a man in particular, that the *will in particular* may be induced to conſent. There muſt likewiſe be that particular conſent of will, and accepting of CHRIST, upon *ſuch terms* as he is offered. They that receive Chriſt aright *enter into that marriage covenant*, reſolving to forſake all others, and obey him, and to *take up his croſs*, and to endure all hardſhips with him, and for him, as ſhame, diſgrace, poverty, hatred in the world, and all manner of miſuſages; this they *conſent to*, and *reſolve upon* for the preſent, and from this time forward, for the *whole* time of their life; which things many neither did, nor intend to do, when they gave their names to Chriſt; they only received him as their *Jeſus*, one by whom they hoped to be ſaved, and honoured, expecting that he ſhould *endow* them with a *fair jointure* of heaven, but they did not receive him as their *Lord*. In doing thus, they erred in the *eſſentials of marriage*. For they erred in the *Perſon*, taking an *Idol Chriſt* for the true *Chriſt*. They erred in the *form of marriage*; they took him not for the *preſent*, *nor abſolutely*, for better for worſe (as we ſay) in ſickneſs and health, in good report and ill report, in perſecution and in peace, forſaking all other, never to part, no not at death. Where-

fore

fore *Chriſt doth not own theſe fooliſh Virgins*, when they would enter the *Bride-chamber*, but ſaith, *I know you not*; becauſe there was no *true conſent* on their part, they had no faith; and their contract or marriage with Chriſt was only in *ſpeech*, but was never *Legal*, or conſummate, Mat. xxvi 12.

By this which hath been ſaid, others who *have* Faith indeed, may *know* they have it, namely, if they ſo believe the Covenant of Grace eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, that with all their hearts they accept of him, and it, ſo that they ſincerely deſire and purpoſe to *ſtand to it on their parts*, as they are able, and *reſt on it ſo far as it concerns Chriſt* to fulfill it. For this is Faith.

Unto this, ſome fearful ſouls will reply; if we have not Faith, except unto *aſſent* unto the truth, we do alſo *receive* Chriſt offered, with a deliberate, entire, and free conſent, to reſt on him, to be ruled by him, and to take part with him in all conditions; then we doubt that we have *no* Faith; becauſe we have ſo hardly brought ourſelves *to conſent*, and find ourſelves *ſo weak* in our conſent, and have been ſo *unfaithful* in keeping promiſe with Chriſt.

Truth, *fulneſs*, and *firmneſs of conſent of will* to receive *Chriſt*, may ſtand with *many doubtings*, and with *much weakneſs*, and *ſenſe of difficulty*, in bringing the heart to conſent. For ſo long as there is *a law in your members* waring againſt the *law of your mind*, you can never do as you would, Rom. vii. 23. If you can bring your

hearts

hearts to *will to conſent, and obey*, in ſpite of all oppoſitions, this argueth *hearty and full conſent*, and a true Faith, Iſa. i. 19. Nay, if you can bring the heart, but to *deſire to receive Chriſt*, and to enter into Covenant with GOD, made mutually between GOD and you in Chriſt, and that it may ſtand according to the offer which he maketh unto you in his Word, even this argueth a *true and firm conſent, and maketh up the match between Chriſt and you.* Even as when *Jacob* related the particulars of an earthly Covenant, into which he would have *Laban* enter with him, *Laban*'s ſaying, *I would it might be according to thy word*, gave proof of his conſent, and did ratify the Covenant betwixt them, Gen. xxx. 34. If you can therefore, when GOD offers unto you the Covenant of grace, commanding you to receive Chriſt, in whom it is eſtabliſhed, and to enter into this Covenant. If (I ſay) you can with *all your heart*, ſay to GOD, *I would it might be according to thy word*; the Covenant is mutually entered into, and the match *is made* betwixt CHRIST and you.

And whereas it doth trouble you, that you cannot be *ſo faithful* to Chriſt, as your Covenant doth bind you, *it is well you are troubled*, if you did not alſo make it an argument, that you have *no* Faith; for in that it *heartily grieveth you*, that you cannot believe, nor perform all faithfulneſs to Chriſt, *it is an evident ſign that you have Faith.* You muſt not think, that after you are truly married to Chriſt, you ſhall be free from evil ſolici-

ſolicitations by your *old* lovers; nay, ſometimes a kind of violence may be offered, by *ſpiritual wickedneſs*, unto you, ſo that you are *forced* to many evils *againſt your will*, Rom. vii. 19. as it may befal a faithful wife, to be *forced* by one ſtronger than ſhe; yet if you give not *full conſent* unto them, and ſuffer not your heart to follow them, your huſband CHRIST will not impute theſe forced evils unto you.

Yet, let none by this take *liberty to offend* Chriſt in the leaſt thing, for though Chriſt love you more tenderly, and more mercifully, than any huſband can love his wife, yet know ye, he doth *not dote* on you; he can *ſee* the ſmalleſt faults, and *ſharply* (though kindly) *rebuke* and *correct* you for them, if you do them preſumptuouſly. But he eſteemeth none to *break ſpiritual wedlock*, ſo as to diſſolve marriage; but thoſe whoſe *hearts are wholly departed from him*, and are ſet upon, and given to ſomething elſe, Heb. iii. 12. If you thus look into the nature of *faith*, (I ſpeak to a ſoul troubled for ſin) you may know and feel that you *have* it.

§. IV. *True Faith diſcerned by the Effects thereof.*

YOU may know a *lively faith* likewiſe, by *moſt certain conſequences* and *effects*, I mean not comfort and joy, which are ſometimes felt, and ſometimes not; but by ſuch *effects*, which are moſt conſtant, and more certain, and may be no leſs felt than joy and comfort, if you would

would ſearch for them; amongſt others I reckon *theſe.*

Firſt, You may know you have Faith by your grieving for and oppoſing of the contrary; if you feel a *fight and conflict between believing and doubting, fear, and diſtruſt*; and in that combat *you take part* with believing, hope, and confidence, or at leaſt deſire heartily that theſe ſhould *prevail*, and are grieved at heart, when the other got the better. If you *feel* this, do not ſay, you have *no feeling*. Do not ſay, you have *no faith.*

This *conflict*, and *deſire to have faith* gave proof, that the *man in the Goſpel*, who came to *Chriſt* to cure his child, *had faith*; *I believe Lord*, ſaith he, *Lord help mine unbelief*, Mat. ix. 24. Do not ſay (as I have heard many) *this man* could ſay I believe; but *we* cannot ſay ſo. I tell you, if you can heartily ſay, *Lord help my unbelief*, I am ſure, any of you may ſay, *I believe.* For, whence is this *ſenſe* of unbelief and *deſire* to believe, but from *Faith?*

Secondly, You may know you have *Faith* (I ſpeak ſtill to an afflicted ſoul which dare not ſin wilfully) inaſmuch as you will *not part with* that Faith which you have upon any terms. I will aſk you (that have given hope to others, that you do believe, and that ye doubt you have not truth of faith and hope in God) only theſe queſtions, and as your heart can anſwer them, ſo you may judge. *Will you part with that faith and hope which you call none, for any price?*

Would

Would you change preſent ſtates with thoſe which preſume they have a ſtrong Faith, whoſe conſciences do not trouble them, but are at quiet, though they live in all manner of wickedneſs? Or at beſt are merely civilly honeſt? Nay, *would you* (if it were poſſible) *forego all that faith, and hope, and other graces of the Spirit, which you call none at all,* and *return* to that former ſtate, wherein you were *in the days of your vanity,* before you endeavoured to leave ſin, and to ſeek the mercy of GOD in Chriſt Jeſus in good earneſt? Would you lay *any other foundation* to build upon, than what you have already laid? Or is there any perſon or thing, whereon you deſire to reſt for Salvation and direction, *beſides* Chriſt Jeſus? If you can anſwer, no; but can ſay with *Peter*; *To whom ſhall we go, Chriſt only hath the words of eternal life*; John vi. 68. you know no other foundation to lay, than what you have laid, and have *willed,* and deſired to lay it right; you *reſolve never to pull down what you have built,* though it be but a little. It is your grief that you build *no faſter* upon it. By this anſwer you may ſee, that your conſcience, before you are aware, doth witneſs for you, and will make you confeſs that you have *ſome true faith* and *hope* in GOD, or at leaſt hope that you have. For (let men ſay what they will to the contrary) "*they always think they have thoſe things, which* "*by no means they can be brought to part with.*"

Thirdly, If you would have *ſenſible* proof of your *faith* and *juſtification*; look for it in the moſt

moſt certain effect, which is in your *Sanctification.* Do you feel yourſelves loaded and *burthened* with ſin? And your hearts diſtreſſed with *ſorrow* for it? And do you alſo perceive yourſelves to be *altered* from what you were? Do you now bear *good will* to GOD's Word and Ordinances? And do you deſire the pure Word of GOD, that you may *grow* in grace *by it?* 1 Pet. ii. 2. Do you love and conſort with *God's people*, becauſe you think they fear GOD? 1 John iii. 14. Is it your deſire to *approve* yourſelves to GOD, in holy obedience? And is it your trouble, that you *cannot* do it? Then certainly you have *Faith*, you have *an effectual Faith.* For what are all theſe but the very *pulſe*, *breath*, and *motions of faith?* James ii. 22. If you feel *grace* to be in you, it is a better feeling, than feeling of *comfort*; for *grace* (in men of underſtanding) is never ſeparated from effectual Faith, but *comfort* many times is; for that may riſe from Preſumption, and falſe Faith. Grace only from the Spirit of GOD, and from true Faith.

§. IV. *Fears concerning the Truth of Sanctification, removed.*

IT is granted by all, that if they are *truly ſanctified*, then they know that they have *faith* and are *juſtified*; but many fear they are not *ſanctified*, and that for theſe ſeeming reaſons.

(1.) Fears

(1.) Fears of not being ſanctified for want of deep Humiliation, anſwered.

Firſt, ſome fear they are not ſanctified, becauſe they do not remember, that ever they felt thoſe *wounds and terrors of Conſcience*, which are firſt wrought in men *to make way to Converſion*; as it was in them who were *prickt at heart* at *Peter's* Sermon, Acts ii. 37. and in St. *Paul*, Acts. ix. 6. and in the *Jaylor:* Acts xvi. 29. Or if they felt any terrors, they fear they were but certain *flaſhes*, and fore-runners of *helliſh torments*; like thoſe of *Cain*, Gen. iv. 13. and *Judas*, Mat. xxvii. 3, 4.

As it is in the *natural birth* with the *mother*, ſo it is in the *ſpiritual birth* with the *child*. There is no birth without *ſome* travail, and pain, but not *all alike*. Thus it is in the *new birth* with all that are come to years of diſcretion. Some have ſo much grief, fear, and horror, that it is intolerable, and leaveth ſo deep an impreſſion, that it *can never be forgotten*; others have ſome *true* ſenſe of grief and fear, but nothing to the former in compariſon, which *may eaſily be forgotten*;

There are cauſes, why ſome feel *more grief* and *fear* in their firſt converſion than others.

1. Some have committed more *groſs*, and *heinous ſins* than others; therefore they have more cauſe and need, to have *more terror and humiliation* than others.

2. GOD doth ſet ſome apart, for *greater employments* than others, ſuch as will require a man of great truſt and experience; wherefore GOD (to

(to prepare them) doth exerciſe ſuch with *greateſt trials*, for their deep humiliation, and for their more ſpeedy and full reformation, that all neceſſary graces might be more *deeply*, and *firmly* rooted in them.

3. Some have been *religiouſly brought up from their infancy*, whereby, as they were kept from groſs ſins; ſo their ſins were ſubdued *by little and little*, without any *ſenſible* impreſſion of horror; grace, and comfort being inſtilled into them almoſt inſenſibly.

4. Some *by natural conſtitution*, and temper of body, *are more fearful*, and more ſenſible of anguiſh than others, which may cauſe, that although they may be alike wounded in conſcience for ſin, yet they may *not feel* it all alike.

5. There may be the like fear, and terror, wrought in the conſcience for ſin, in one as well as another; yet it may not leave the like *laſting ſenſe*, and *impreſſion* in the memory of the one, as in the other. Becauſe *God may ſhew himſelf gracious, in diſcovering a remedy, and divine comfort to one, ſooner than the other.* As two men may be in peril of their lives by enemies; the one as ſoon as he ſeeth his danger, ſeeth an *impregnable Caſtle* to ſtep into, or an army of friends to reſcue him; this man's fear is *quickly* over, and forgotten: The other doth not only ſee great danger, but is ſurpriſed by his enemies, is *taken and carried captive*, and is a long time in cruel bondage and fear of his life, till at length, he

he is redeemed out of their hand. Such a fear as this can never be *forgotten.*

You may evidently know, whether you had *ſufficient grief*, and *fear*, in your *firſt converſion*, by theſe ſigns. Had you ever ſuch, and ſo much grief for ſin, that it made you to diſlike *ſin*, and to diſlike *yourſelf* for it, and to be weary and heavy laden *with it*; ſo as to make you heartily confeſs your ſins unto GOD, and to aſk of him mercy and forgiveneſs? Hath it made you to look better to your ways, and more careful to pleaſe God? Then be ſure, it was a competent and ſufficient grief; becauſe it was *a godly ſorrow to repentance, never to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10.

Again, are you *now* grieved and troubled, when you fall into particular ſins? Then, you may be certain, that there was a *time* when you were ſufficiently humbled in your Converſion; for this *latter* grief is but putting that grief into further *act*; whereof you received an *Habit* in your firſt *Converſion.*

If you can for the preſent find any proofs of Converſion, it ſhould not trouble you, though you know not *when*, or *by whom*, or *how* you were converted; any more than thus, that *you know that God hath wrought it by his Word and Spirit.* When any field bringeth forth *a crop of good corn*, this proveth that it was ſufficiently *plowed*; for GOD doth never *ſow*, until the *fallow ground* of mens hearts is ſufficiently broken up.

Now

Now as for those which remember that they have had *terrors* of conscience, and it may be, ever and anon feel them still, who fear that these were not beginnings of *Conversion*, but rather beginnings of *Desperation and hellish Torments*; you should know, that there is great difference between these and those.

Those fears and horrors, which are only flashes, and *beginnings* of hellish torment, are wrought only by the *law* and *spirit of bondage*, giving not so much as a secret hope of Salvation. But those fears, which make way unto, and which are the *beginnings* of Conversion, are indeed first wrought by the *law* also, yet *not only*, for the *Gospel* hath at last some share with them; partly to *melt* the heart, broken by the Law, partly to *support* the heart, causing it by some little glimpse of light, to entertain a possibility of mercy; compare the terrors of *Cain* and *Judas*, with those of the men prickt at *Peter's Sermon*, with St. *Paul's* and the *Jaylor's*, and you shall see both this, and the following differences.

2. The former terrors and troubles are *caused*, either *only for fear of Hell*, and fierce wrath of God, but not for sin; *or if at all for sin*, it is only in respect of the *punishment*. These tending to conversion, are also *caused through fear of Hell*, but *not only*; the heart of one thus troubled is grieved because of his sin, and that *not only because it deserveth Hell*; but because by it he hath *offended*, and *dishonoured God*.

3. Thoſe, who are troubled in the firſt ſort do *continue headſtrong* and *obſtinate*, retaining their uſual hatred againſt GOD, and againſt ſuch as fear GOD, as alſo their love to wickedneſs; only, *it may be, they may conceal and ſmother their rancor*, through the ſpirit of reſtraint, that for the time it doth not appear; but in the other will appear *ſome alteration towards goodneſs*; as, whatſoever their opinions, and ſpeeches were of GOD's people before, now they begin to think *better* of them, and of their ways. So did they in the *Acts*; before they were prickt at heart, they did *ſcoff at the Apoſtles*, and derided GOD's gifts in them, Acts ii. 13. but afterwards ſaid *men and brethren*; they thought reverently of them, and ſpake reverently to them, Acts ii. 37. See the ſame in *Paul*, in his readineſs to do *whatſoever* Chriſt ſhould enjoin him, Acts ix. 6. The *Jaylor* alſo in this caſe, quickly became well affected to *Paul* and *Silas*, Acts xvi. 24.

4. The former ſort, when they are troubled with horror of conſcience, fly from GOD, and *ſeek no remedy, but ſuch as is worldly and carnal*, as company keeping, muſick, and other earthly delights, as in building, and in their lands and livings, according as their own corrupt hearts, and their vain companions adviſe them, *whereby ſometimes they ſtupify and deaden the Conſcience, and lay it aſleep for a time.* Thus *Cain* and *Saul* allayed their diſtempered ſpirits, Gen. iv. 17, &c. 1 Sam. xvi. 17. And if they have ſome godly friends, which ſhall bring them to GOD's Miniſters,

misters, or do themselves minister to them the instructions of the Word, this is *tedious, and irksome* to them, they cannot relish these means, nor take any satisfaction in them. But the other *are willing to seek to God*, by seeking to his *Ministers*, Acts ii. 37. *to whom God hath given the tongue of the learned to minister a word in season, to the soul that is weary*; and though they cannot presently *receive* comfort, will not utterly *reject* them, except in case of *Melancholy*, which must not be imputed to them, but to their disease, Isa. l. 4.

And in *application of the remedy*, as there were *two* parts of the grief, so they must find remedies for *both*, or they cannot be fully satisfied. First, they were filled with grief for *fear of Hell*; for the renewing of which, the blood of Christ is applied, together with GOD's promise of forgiveness to him that believeth, and a commandment to believe, all this is applied to take away the *guilt and punishment of sin*. Secondly, they were troubled for *sin*, whereby they dishonoured and displeased GOD, now unless also they feel in some measure, the *grace of Christ's Spirit healing the wound of sin, and subduing the power of it, and enabling them at least to will and strive to please God*, they cannot be satisfied. As it was with *David*, though GOD had said by the Prophet, *The Lord hath put away thy sin*, that is, *forgiven it*; 2 Sam. xii. 13. yet he had no comfort until *God* had *created in him a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him*, Psal. li. 10. Whereas

if fear of Hell be removed, it is *all* that the former ſort care for.

5. As for the firſt ſort, it may be, while they were afraid to be damned, they had ſome *reſtraint of ſin*, and it may be, made ſome eſſays towards reformation; but when their terrors are over and forgotten, then *like the dog, they return to their vomit*, and *like the ſow that was waſhed, to their wallowing in the mire* of their wonted ungodlineſs, 2 Pet. ii. 22. But as for them, whoſe terrors were preparations to Converſion, when they obtain peace of Conſcience, they are exceeding *thankful* for it, and are made by it *more fearful to offend*. And although they may, and often do fall into ſome *particular* ſin, or ſins, for which they renew their grief and repentance; yet, *they do not fall into an allowed courſe of ſin any more*. Thus much in anſwer to the firſt doubt of Sanctification.

(2.) Fears of not being ſanctified from the Intruſion of many evil Thoughts.

Secondly, There are *many which doubt they are not ſanctified, becauſe of thoſe ſwarms of evil thoughts which are in them*; ſome whereof (which is fearful for them to think or ſpeak) are *blaſphemous, unnatural*, and *inhuman*; calling *God's* being, truth, power, and providence into queſtion; doubting whether the *Scripture* be the Word of GOD, and others of this nature, having alſo *thoughts of laying violent hands upon themſelves, and others*, with many more of that and other kinds of evil and blaſphemous thoughts, ſuch as they never

never felt *at all*, or *not ſo much*, in their known ſtate of unregeneracy; before they made a more ſtrict profeſſion of godlineſs; and ſuch as, they think, none that are truly ſanctified are troubled with.

To reſolve this doubt, know that *evil thoughts* are either put into men *from without*, as when *Satan* doth ſuggeſt, or wicked men do ſolicite evil, 1 Chron. xxi. 1. thus *Job*'s wife, *curſe God and die*, Job ii. 9. Or they do ariſe *from within*, out of the evil concupiſcence of a *man's own heart*, Mat. xv. 19. And ſometimes they are *mixt*, coming both from within, and without.

Thoſe which come *only from Satan*, may uſually be known from them that ariſe out of man's heart, by their *ſuddenneſs* and *inceſſantneſs*; namely, when they are repelled they will ſometimes return again an hundred times in a day. Alſo they are unreaſonable, and unnatural, ſtrange, and violent in their motions; receiving no check, but by violent reſiſtance. Whereas, *thoſe which altogether, or in great part, are from man's own corrupt heart*; they uſually ariſe by occaſion of ſome *external* object, or from ſome *natural* cauſe, and are not ſo *ſudden*, and *inceſſant*, nor ſo *unnatural*, and *violent*.

Now all thoſe evil thoughts (*or thoughts of evil* rather) which are from *Satan*; *if you conſent not unto them*, but abhor and reſiſt them with deteſtation, *they are not your ſins* but *Satans*, and theirs that did put them into you. They are *your croſſes*, becauſe they are matter of trouble

to you, but they are *not your ſins*, becauſe they leave no guilt upon you. They are no more your ſins than theſe thoughts, *Caſt thyſelf down headlong*, and *fall down and worſhip me* (viz. the Devil,) were *Chriſt's* ſins, if you conſent not, but reſiſt them, as CHRIST did, Mat. iv. 6, 9.

You ſhould carefully obſerve this. For if the *Devil* was ſo malicious and preſumptuous, as to aſſault our *bleſſed Saviour* with ſuch deviliſh temptations, injecting into him ſuch vile and blaſphemous notions and thoughts; ſhould you think it ſtrange that he doth perplex *you* with the like? And for all this, you have no cauſe to doubt, whether *Chriſt* were the *Son of GOD or no*, (though the *Devil* made an (*if*) of it, and it was the thing the Devil aimed at; why then ſhould it be doubted that any of *Chriſt's members* may be thus aſſaulted? and yet ſurely they have no cauſe for this, to queſtion, whether they be *ſanctified*, or in a ſtate of grace? For theſe vain thoughts in them are ſo far from being abominable evils in them, that (being not conſented to) they are, as I ſaid, not their *ſins*.

It is a piece of the *Devil's cunning*, *firſt* to fill a man full of abominable thoughts, *and then* to be the firſt that ſhall put in his accuſation and doubts, *viz. Is it poſſible for any child of God, that is ſanctified with God's holy Spirit, to have ſuch thoughts?* But conſider well, that an innocent *Benjamin*, may have *Joſeph's* cup put into his ſack's mouth, without his knowledge or conſent, by him, who for his own ends, intended thereby

to

to accuſe *Benjamin* of theft and ingratitude, Gen. xliv. 2, 4, 15. Was *Benjamin* any thing the more diſhoneſt or ungrateful for all this? No! Satan doth not want malice or cunning in this kind to play his feats. Where he cannot *corrupt* men, yet there he will *vex* and perplex them.

But let it be granted that theſe *blaſphemous and abominable thoughts*, which trouble you, *are indeed your ſins*, either becauſe they ariſe from *your own* evil heart, or becauſe you did *conſent* to them. If ſo, then you have much cauſe to *grieve*, and to *repent*, but *not to deſpair*, or to ſay you are not GOD's child; for it is poſſible for a ſanctified man to be made guilty, either by outward act, or by conſent and approbation, or by ſome means or other, of any one ſin except that againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*; and yet if he *confeſs* and *bewail* his ſin, and do repent, believe, and aſk mercy, *it ſhall be forgiven him*; For he hath our *Saviour's word* for it, Mat. xii. 31, 32.

And whereas you ſay you were not troubled with ſuch abominable thoughts *before* you made profeſſion of an holy life. I anſwer, this is not to be wondred at. For before that time the Devil and you were *friends*, then he thought it enough to ſuffer you to be proud of your civil honeſty, or, it may be, to content yourſelf with a meer form of godlineſs, ſuppoſe that you were free from notorious crimes, as adultery, lying, ſwearing, &c. For when he could by theſe more plauſible ways *lead you captive at his will*, he ſaw you were *his* ſure enough already; what

need was there then, that he ſhould ſolicite you any further, or *diſturb* your quiet? But now that you have renounced him in *earneſt*, and that he and you are *oppoſites*; you may be ſure, that he will attempt by all means to *reduce* you into your old ſtate: or if he fail of that, yet as long as you live (ſo far as GOD ſhall permit) he will do what he can, to *diſturb* your peace, by vexing, and moleſting you.

Moreover, GOD doth permit this, for diverſe holy purpoſes.

1. To *diſcover* the *Devil's malice.*

2. To *chaſten his children*, and to *humble* them, becauſe they were too well *conceited* of the goodneſs of their nature in their unregeneracy, or might be too *uncharitable and cenſorious* of others; and too *preſumptuous* of their own ſtrength ſince they were regenerate.

3. GOD likewiſe permiteth theſe *buffetings and winnowings of Satan*, as to *prevent pride*, and other ſins, ſo to *exerciſe and try* the graces of his children; to give them experience of their own weakneſs, and of his grace towards them, and *ſtrength* in them, even in their weakneſs; preſerving them from being vanquiſhed; and although they fight with principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſs. For *God's ſtrength is made perfect in man's weakneſs*, 2 Cor. xii. 9.

(1.) Remedies againſt evil and blaſphemous thoughts.

That

That Chriſtians who are troubled with blaſphemous, and other abominable thoughts, may be *leſs troubled*, or at leaſt *not hurt* by them, follow theſe directions.

1ſt. Proofs of the Being of GOD.

Firſt, *Arm yourſelf with evident proofs that there is a God*, that there is a *divine ſpiritual, abſolute*, and independent *Being*, from whom, and to whom are all things, and by whom all things do conſiſt.—Next, *confirm yourſelf in a ſure perſwaſion, that the Bible* and holy *Scriptures are the pure word of this only true God.*—Then *labour with your heart that it ſo awe and love God and his will, as to be always ready to riſe againſt every motion to ſin*, (eſpecially theſe of the worſt kind) *with loathing and deteſtation.*

To be aſſured that there is a GOD, *conſider firſt the Creation, Preſervation, and Order of the Creation.* How could it be poſſible that ſuch a world could be made and upheld, or that there ſhould be ſuch an order, or ſubordination amongſt creatures, if there were *not a God?* The *heavens give their influence* into the air, water, and earth, theſe by vertue hereof afford means of comfort and ſupport to all *living creatures*, Pſal. xix. 1. civ. The creatures *without ſenſe* ſerve for the uſe of the *ſenſitive*; and *all* ſerve for the *uſe of man*; who although he be an *excellent creature*, yet of himſelf he is ſo *impotent*, that he cannot add *one cubit* to his ſtature, Luke xi. 25. nay, he cannot make *one hair* white or

black, therefore could not be the *maker* of theſe things, Mat. v. 36.

Moreover, If the Creatures were not limitted and ordered by a *ſuperior Being*, they would one devour another, in ſuch a manner as to bring all to confuſion. For the *ſavage Beaſts* would eat up and deſtroy all the *tame and gentle*, the *ſtrong* would conſume the *weak*, the *Sea* if it had not bounds ſet to his *proud waves*, Job xxxviii. 10, 11. *would ſtand above the mountains*, Pſal. civ. 6. and the *Devil*, who hateth mankind, would not ſuffer a man *to live* at any quiet, if there were not a *God*, *one ſtronger than the ſtrongeſt creatures*, to reſtrain *Satan*, and to confine *every thing* to his place and order. How could there be a continual *viciſſitude* of things? How could we have *rain and fruitful ſeaſons*, *and our ſouls fed with food and gladneſs*, if there were no *God?* Acts xiv. 15, 16, 17. Thus by the *Creation*, the *inviſible things of God*, that is, *his eternal power and God-head are clearly ſeen*; Rom. i. 20. for by theſe things which are thus made and thus preſerved, *he hath not left himſelf without witneſs*, that *God is*, and that *he made all things for himſelf*, *even for his own glory*, Pro. xvi. 4.

Secondly, If all things came by *nature*, and not from *a God of nature*, how then have *Miracles* (which are many times againſt nature, and do always tranſcend and exceed the order and power of *nature*) been wrought? For nature in itſelf doth always work (even in its greateſt works) in *one* and the ſame manner and *order*. For

Nature

Nature is nothing elſe, but the *power of God in the creatures to ſupport them, and to produce their effects in a due order.* Wherefore if any thing be from *Nature*, or from *Miracle*, it is from *GOD*: the one from his *power in things ordinary*, the other from his *power in things extraordinary*; wherefore whether you look on things natural, or above nature, you may ſee there is a *God.*

Thirdly, Look into the admirable workmanſhip of but one of the Creatures, namely, your own *ſoul*, and particularly into your *Conſcience*; whence are your fears that you ſhall be damned? What need it; nay, how could it trouble you, for your blaſphemous thoughts and other ſins, if it were not privy to itſelf, that there is a *God*, which will bring *every thought* to judgment? Eccleſ. xii. 14.

Fourthly, make uſe of the eye *of faith*, whereby you may *ſee God, who is inviſible*, and that more diſtinctly, more certainly, and more fully, Heb. xi. 27. Remember that it is the *principle of all religion*, which is firſt to be learned, namely, *That God is, that all things are made by him*, and that *he is a rewarder of all thoſe*, that ſo believe this, that they *diligently ſeek him*, Heb. xi. 3, 6.

2d. Proofs of the Divinity of the Scriptures.

That you may aſſure yourſelves, that the *Scriptures are the Word of God.* Conſider firſt, how *infallibly true they relate things paſt*, according as they were many hundred years before; alſo *in foretelling things to come* many hundreds of years

years after, which you may see to have come to pass, and daily do come to pass accordingly: Which they could not do if they were not *God's Word.*

2. They lay open the particular and most *secret thoughts* and affections of man's heart, which it could not do, if it were not the *word of him, that knoweth all things; in whose sight all things are naked and open,* Heb. iv. 12, 13.

3. They command *all duties* of piety, sobriety, and equity, and do prohibit *all vice,* in such a manner as all the *writings and laws* of all men laid together, neither do, nor can do, Psal. xix. 7.

4. As the *Scriptures discover* a state of eternal damnation unto man, and *condemn him to it for sin*; Gal. iii. 22. so they *reveal a sure way of Salvation,* Rom. i. 17. which is *such a way as could never enter into the imagination and heart of any man,* or of all men together, without the Word and Revelation of the Spirit of God, who in his wisdom found out, and ordained this way, 1 Cor. ii. 9.

5. The *Scriptures* are a *word of power almighty* beyond the power of any creature; *pulling down strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, 6.

6. Lastly, the *Scriptures* have an *universal consent* with themselves, though penned by divers men; which proveth that they are not of any

private

private interpretation; but that thoſe holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt, 2 Pet. i. 20, 21. Much more might be ſaid to this point, but this may ſuffice.

3d. Helps againſt unnatural and violent Suggeſtions.

Againſt temptations to offer *violent hands* upon yourſelf and others, you muſt have theſe or the like *Scriptures* in readineſs. *Thou ſhalt not kill,* Exod. xx. And *ſee thou do thyſelf no harm,* and ſuch like, Acts xvi. 28. And that you may be prepared againſt *all other* vile temptations, *poſſeſs your hearts* before-hand *with this,* that *theſe are great wickedneſſes againſt God, and your God.* When *Joſeph* could ſay, *ſhall I commit this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt GOD,* no temptations could prevail againſt him, Gen xxxix. 9. Thus much for fore-arming yourſelves againſt blaſphemous and vile thoughts and temptations.

In the ſecond place; when you are thus armed, whenſoever theſe blaſphemous and fearful thoughts riſe in you, or are forced upon you, *take heed of two extremes.*

Firſt, *do not contemn them* ſo as to ſet light by them, for this giveth ſtrength to *ſin,* and advantage to *Satan.*

Secondly, *Be not diſcouraged, nor yet faint thro' deſpair* of being free from them, in due time; or of withſtanding them in the mean time. For then *Satan* hath his end, and his will of you.

But *carry yourſelves in a middle courſe*; pore not too much on them, diſpute not too much with

with them; preſume not of your own ſtrength; but, *by lifting up of your hearts in prayer, call in GOD's aid to reſiſt and withſtand them*; preſent ſome *ſuitable Scripture* to your mind, ſuch as is direct againſt them, whereby you may with an *holy deteſtation reſiſt* them, according to CHRIST's example with *(It is written,)* Mat. iv. 6, 7. Now when you have done this, then (if it be poſſible) think on them *no more.*

Thirdly, endeavour at all times to *make Conſcience* in the whole courſe of your life *of your thoughts*, even of the *leaſt thoughts* of evil, yea of *all thoughts*, and this will be a good means to keep out all evil thoughts, 2 Cor. x. 5. If it cannot prevail thus far; yet you ſhall have this benefit by it, when your heart can teſtify for you, that you *would* in every thing pleaſe *God*, and that *you make conſcience of leſs ſinful thoughts* than thoſe vile ones with which you are troubled; then you may be ſure that you may be, and *are God's children*, and are *ſanctified*, notwithſtanding thoſe blaſphemous thoughts and deviliſh temptations.

(3.) Doubts of ſanctification from the prevalence of ſome groſs ſin.

Again, Some doubt they are *not ſanctified*, becauſe they have fallen into ſome *groſs ſin*; it may be into worſe than thoſe which they committed in their ſtate of unregeneracy.

I anſwer ſuch. You are in very ill caſe, if you do not *belie* yourſelves; and *if ſo*, you are in ill caſe becauſe you do belie yourſelves. I adviſe

viſe you that have thus ſinned in either, to repent ſpeedily, and to aſk forgiveneſs. *God by his Spirit* doth as well call you to it, as he did *Iſrael*, ſaying, *Return to the Lord, thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity, take with you words, and turn unto the Lord and ſay unto him, take away all our iniquity, and receive us graciouſly*, then will God anſwer, *I will heal your backſliding, I will love you freely*, Hoſea xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. You ſay that you are *backſlidden*, ſuppoſe it were ſo, he ſaith, *I will heal your backſlidings, &c.* read Jer. iii. 12, 13. Mic. vii. 18, 19.

You muſt not doubt, but that *groſs ſins* committed after a man is effectually called, *are pardonable*. It is the *Devil's policy* to caſt theſe doubts into your heads, ſo wholly to drive you to deſpair, by *ſhutting out all hope of grace and mercy, that you might have no thought of returning, and ſeeking unto God again*; but believe him not: he is a *Liar*, John viii. 44. For it may befal one that is in a ſtate of grace, to commit the *ſame* groſs ſins after Converſion, which he did before, *if not greater* than the ſame. Did not *David*, by his adultery and murder, *exceed* all the ſins that ever he committed before his Converſion, 2 Sam. 11. 1 Kings xv. 5. Did not *Solomon worſe in his old age* than ever in his younger days, 1 Kings xi. 4, 5. Did *Peter* commit any ſin like that of denying and forſwearing his Maſter, before his Converſion? Mat. xxvi. 74. Why were the *falls* of theſe Worthies written,

ten, but for *examples* to us on whom the ends of the earth are come? 1 Cor. x. 11, 12.

Firſt, That *every one that ſtandeth ſhould take heed leaſt he fall.*

Secondly, That *if any are fallen into any ſin by any occaſion*, that he might riſe again as they did, and *that they may not deſpair* of mercy.

No man (though converted) hath any aſſurance, except he is ſpecially *watchful*, and except he have ſpecial *aſſiſtance* of GOD's grace, to be preſerved from *any ſin*, except that againſt the *holy Ghoſt*; but if he be watchful over his ways, and do improve the grace of GOD in him after Converſion, ſeeking unto GOD for increaſe of grace, then he, as well as the Apoſtle *Paul*, may be kept from ſuch groſs ſins as are of the fouleſt nature, otherwiſe not, 1 Cor. iv. 4.

Indeed they that are *born of God*; have received the ſanctifying Influences of GOD's *Spirit*, that ſeed of grace, which ever remaineth in them. Whence it is that they ſin otherwiſe *in a ſtate of regeneracy* than they did before; inſomuch that the *Scripture of truth*, (notwithſtanding the after ſins) ſaith, that *whoſoever is born of God ſinneth not*, 1 John iii. 9. not that they are free from the act and guilt of ſin, for *in many things we ſin all*, ſaith St. *James*, James iii. 2. but becauſe they *ſin not with full conſent*, Rom. vii. 15, &c. They *are not ſervants to ſin*; they *do not make a trade of ſin*, as they did in their unregeneracy, John viii. 34. Rom. vi. 16, 18, 19, 20, 22. *Neither do they ſin the ſin unto death*, John v. 17, 18.

v. 17, 18. which all unregenerate men may, and ſome do. Yet for all this, it may, and often doth come to paſs, that partly from *Satan*'s malice and power, and partly from the *remains of corrupt nature*, partly from *God's juſt judgments on many*, becauſe of their negligence and preſumption, their conceit of their own ſtrength, or their cenſoriouſneſs and unmercifulneſs to them that had fallen, that *true Chriſtians may fall into ſome particular groſs ſin or ſins* (for matter) *greater* than ever before Converſion.

(4.) Doubts of Sanctification from the want of affectionate ſorrow for ſin; and the defects of Repentance.

Others yet complain and ſay, *they fear they have not repented*, they feel that they cannot repent; for they *cannot grieve* as they ought. They can pour out floods of tears, more than enough for *croſſes*, but many times they cannot ſhed one tear for *ſin*. They do nothing as they ought to do. They live in their ſins ſtill. How then can they be ſaid to have *repented*, and to be ſanctified.

If by doing as you ought, you mean *perfectly fulfilling* every point and circumſtance of the *Law*, never any meer man did thus; if you could do as you ought, what need have you of Chriſt Jeſus as a Saviour and an Advocate.

But if by doing as you *ought*, you mean a doing according as *God*, now (qualifying the rigour of the *Law* by the graciouſneſs of the *Goſpel*) doth require of you, and in *Chriſt* will accept

cept of you; namely, *to will and endeavour in truth to do the whole will of God*; then, if you will, deſire, and endeavour to mourn for ſin, to repent, and obey as you ſhould, you may truly be ſaid *to do as you ought*, Iſa. i. 19. And in this caſe, look by faith to the perfect obedience of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, your ſurety and redeemer.

And as for *weeping at croſſes*, ſooner and more than for *ſins*, this doth not always argue more grief for one than for the other; for weeping is an *effect of the body*, following much the temper thereof; alſo ſenſe apprehendeth a natural object, or matter of bodily grief in ſuch a manner, that the body is wrought upon *more ſenſibly*, than when a ſpiritual object of grief is only apprehended by Faith. Wherefore bodily tears flow eaſily from ſenſe of croſſes, and more hardly from thoughts of ſin; for *ſpiritual objects* do not ordinarily work *paſſions* in the body, ſo ſoon, or ſo much as *bodily and ſenſible objects* do. Grief for a croſs is more outward and paſſionate, thence *tears*; but ſpiritual grief is more inward and deep, in which caſes, *tears lie ſo far off*, and the *organs of tears* are ſo much contracted, and ſhut up; that they cannot be fetch'd, or wrung out, but with much labour. When you are bidden in *Scripture* to mourn and weep for your ſins, nothing elſe is meant, but to *grieve much, and to grieve heartily*, as they do, who weep much at outward calamities. Beſides, it is not unknown that even in natural grief, *dry grief*, is many times greater than that which is moiſtned,

and

and *overfloweth with tears.* And ſome *ſoft* effeminate ſpirits can weep at any thing, when ſome *harder* ſpirits can weep at nothing. As the greateſt *ſpiritual joy* is not expreſſed in *laughter*, ſo, neither is the greateſt *ſpiritual grief* expreſſed in *tears. God regards the inward ſighing of a contrite heart*; more than the outward tears of the eyes, Pſal. li. 17. An *hypocritical Saul* being overcome with kindneſs, 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, 18. and a *falſe-hearted Ahab*, being upon the rack of fear, may in their *qualms* and paſſions *weep*, and externally humble themſelves, and that in part for ſin; when a *dear child of God* may not be able to command *one tear*, 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29. The time when GOD's Children have moſt plenty of tears, is when the extremity and anguiſh of grief is well over, namely, when their hearts begin to *melt* through hope of mercy, Zach. xii. 10.

And as for *leaving ſin altogether*; who ever did in this life? Who ever ſhall? Since there is *no man* that liveth, and *ſinneth not*, 2 Chro. vi. 36. But miſtake not, you may through GOD's grace have left *ſin*, when yet *ſin* hath not left you. For whoſoever hateth ſin, and reſolveth againſt it, and *in the Law of his mind* would not commit it; but is drawn to it by *Satan*, and by the *law of his members*: and (after it is done) doth not allow it, but diſclaims it with grief; this man hath *left ſin*, Rom. vii. 23. And if this be your caſe, it may be ſaid of you, as the Apoſtle

ſaid

ſaid of himſelf: it is not *you* that doeth evil; but it is *ſin*, that dwelleth in you, Rom. vii. 20.

(5.) Many yet complain, they cannot Pray, Read, Hear, Meditate, nor get any good by the beſt Companies, or beſt conferences which they can meet with. They are ſo *dull*, ſo *forgetful*, ſo full of *diſtractions*, and ſo *unfruitful*, when they go about, or have been about any thing that is good, that they fear they have *no grace* at all in them; yea it maketh them ſometimes to *forbear* theſe duties; and for the moſt part to go about them without heart.

It is not ſtrange that it ſhould be ſo with you; ſo long as there is a *Satan* to hinder you, and ſo long as you carry about the *old man* and body of ſin in you. Moreover, do you not many times go about theſe holy duties *remiſly*, *negligently*, only cuſtomarily, *without preparation* thereunto, *not looking to your feet*, and putting off your ſhoes before you approach unto *God's* holy things, and holy preſence? Do you not many times ſet upon theſe holy duties in the power of your *own* might, and not in the power of *God's* might; or have you not been *proud*, or too well conceited of yourſelves, when you have felt that you have performed good duties with ſome life, or, are you ſure, that you ſhould not be *ſpiritually proud*, if you had your deſire in doing all theſe? Farther, do you not *miſcall* things; calling that, no Prayer, no Hearing, &c. or no fruit, becauſe you do them not *ſo well*, nor bring forth *ſo much*, as in your ſpiritually covetous deſires

ſires you long to do, and have? If it be thus with you, then firſt *mend* all theſe faults, confeſs them to GOD, and aſk mercy. Next be *thankful* for your deſires, to Pray, Read, Hear, &c. And for your longing to do all theſe as you *ſhould*; proſecute thoſe deſires, but always in the ſenſe of your *own inſufficiency*, and in the power of GOD's *might*; then all the fore-mentioned duties will be performed with leſs difficulty, and with more fruit and comfort.

Yet, becauſe in all theſe duties you travail to heaven-ward up the hill, and your paſſage is againſt Wind and Tide, and with a ſtrong oppoſition of enemies in the way; you muſt never look to perform them without ſenſe of *much difficulty*, and *little progreſs* in compariſon of what you aim at in your deſires. In concerns you therefore to ply your oars, and to apply yourſelves, by all means, to *work out your Salvation with fear and trembling*; I mean, with *fear to offend* in any of the afore-mentioned duties, *not in fear* that you have no grace, becauſe you cannot perform them as well as you ſhould, and would, Phil. ii. 12. For ſince you *feel* and *bewail* your dulneſs, deadneſs, and unprofitableneſs in holy ſervices, it argueth that you have *life*, becauſe no man *feeleth corruption*, and diſliketh it, *by corruption*, but *by grace*. I am ſure that ſuch as have no true grace, can, and do daily, fail in all theſe duties, but either they *find not* their failings, or if they do, yet they *complain not* of them with grief and diſlike. If you heartily

heartily grieve, becauſe you do no better, your *deſires* to do as you ſhould do, *are a true ſign* of grace in you, Neh. i. 11. For that duty is always well done, in GOD's account, where there is *truth of endeavour* to do well, and *true grief* that it is done no better.

And whereas you ſay, that by reaſon of want of ſpiritual life in holy duties, you have been made to *neglect them* altogether. I pray, what have you got thereby, but much grief, and uneaſineſs? But tell me how is it with you, are you pleaſed with yourſelf in your *neglect*, or is it ſo that you can have no peace in your hearts, until you ſet yourſelves diligently to do thoſe duties *again*, as well as you can? If ſo, it is a ſign that you are not quite deſtitute of ſaving grace.

(6.) Doubts of Sanctification from ſudden dulneſs after duties, removed.

Others, when they have been at holy exerciſes, and in good company, have felt joy, and ſweet comfort therein; but *afterward*, often times much dulneſs hath ſuddenly ſeized upon them; which maketh them fear they have not root in themſelves, and that their joys and comforts were not ſound.

This dulneſs *after* freſh comforts may, and often doth befal thoſe, in whom is truth of grace, but commonly through their *own* fault. And to ſpeak freely to you; it may be you were *not thankful* to GOD for your joys and comforts when you had them; but did aſcribe too much

to

to *yourſelves*, or unto the *outward means* by which you had them. Or it may be, you did too ſoon *let go your hold* of theſe ſpiritual comforts, betaking yourſelf to worldly buſineſs, or to other thoughts, before you had ſufficiently digeſted theſe, and before you had committed them unto ſafe cuſtody, inſomuch that the *Devil* finding your comforts lie looſe, and unguarded, ſtealeth them from you; or elſe haply the *Lord* knoweth that you are not able to *bear the continuance* of your joys and comforts, but your hearts will be over-light, and over-joyed, and *exalted above meaſure*; therefore either as juſt chaſtiſements, or in his loving wiſdom, GOD may ſuffer deadneſs in this ſort to ſeize upon you, 2 Cor. xii. 7.

(7.) There are alſo ſome, when they perceive, that ſome new converts to Religion, which have not had half of the time, and means to be good as they have had, yet *outſtrip* them in knowledge, faith, mortification, and willingneſs to die; wherefore they doubt of the truth of their own graces.

It is more than you can certainly know, whether they have *more* ſaving grace than you; for when with a charitable eye you look upon the outſide of another's behaviour, and ſhall look with a ſevere and ſearching eye into the corruptions of your own heart, you may eaſily, through modeſty and charity, *think others better than yourſelves*, and it is good for you ſo to do; an error in that caſe, if you do commit it, is tolerable.

Many

Many alſo can *utter* what they have, it may be, better than you, and can make a ſmall matter *ſeem much*, and a little to go far, when many times you, in modeſty, may not ſet forth yourſelf, or, if you would, cannot.

But let it be granted, that many of ſhort ſtanding in the *School of Chriſtianity*, have got the ſtart of you in grace: If it was through *God's* grace accompanying their diligence, and from his juſt hand upon you, following your negligence, then they are to be *commended*, and you are to be *humbled*, and to be provoked unto an *holy emulation* by them to quicken your pace, and and to double your diligence. But take heed that it be not your *pride and ſelf-love*, which cauſeth that you cannot bear it, that others ſhould be *better* than yourſelves.

It may be that it is *not your fault*, but it is from GOD's abundant grace unto others, above that which you have received: For the *Scriptures* maketh it evident, that GOD giveth unto ſeveral men *differently* according to his good pleaſure, Eph. iv. 7. Rom. xii. 3. 1 Cor. xii. 11. hence it was that *David became wiſer than his teachers, and ancients*; Pſal. cxix. 99, 100. and the *Apoſtle Paul* attained more grace than thoſe that were in *Chriſt* before him, GOD giveth unto ſome *five Talents*, when he giveth unto others but *two*; he that hath *moſt* given him, gaineth in the *ſame* ſpace of time, twice as much as the other, yet he that gained but two Talents had his *commendation*, and his proportionable reward of well-doing.

doing. For the *Lord* ſaith unto him alſo, *Well done faithful ſervant, enter into thy Maſter's joy*, Mat. xxv. 21, 22, 23. For he improved his Talents according to the meaſure of grace received, though he gained not ſo much as the other.

Take heed that your eye be not evil, becauſe GOD is good, Mat. xx. 15. *May not he give as much to the laſt as unto the firſt*, and more if he pleaſe? We ſhould rather be *thankful* for the increaſe of grace in others, than either to *repine* at them, or without ground, to *conclude* againſt the truth of our own. For we are much the better, if we would ſee it, for others graces; *God's kingdom* is enlarged and ſtrengthned thereby, the *common good of Chriſt's body*, which is the *Church*, gaineth by it. Now the more excellent any member of the body is, according to his gifts and place, *the reſt of the members ſhould therein the more rejoice*, 1 Cor. xii. 26.

Laſtly, Many yet will ſay, that their hearts remain *hard* and *ſtony*, yea, they ſay, that they grow harder and harder; wherefore they think that the ſtony heart was never taken out of them, and that they remain *unſanctified*.

Know, that there are *two ſorts* of hard hearts. One *total and not felt*, which will not be broken, nor brought unto remorſe either by GOD's Threats, Commandments, Promiſes, Judgments, or Mercies; Zach. vii. 11. but obſtinately ſtandeth out in a courſe of ſin, *being paſt feeling*, Eph. iv. 19.

The ſecond is, an *hardneſs mixt with ſome ſoftneſs*, which is *felt* and *bewailed:* This is incident to God's Children; of this the *Church complaineth*, ſaying unto God, *Why haſt thou hardened our hearts againſt thy fear?* Iſa. lxiii. 17. Now when the heart feeleth its *hardneſs*, and complaineth of it, is grieved, and diſliketh it, and would that it were *tender* like *Joſiah's*, ſo that it could *melt at the hearing of the Word*, this is a ſure *proof* that the heart is regenerate and *not altogether hard*, but hath ſome meaſure of true ſoftneſs; for it is by *ſoftneſs* that *hardneſs* of heart is felt, witneſs your own experience; for before the hammer and fire of the Word was applied to your hearts, you had *no ſenſe* of it, and never *complained* thereof, 2 Chro. xxxiv. 27.

You muſt not call a *heavy* heart, a hard heart; you muſt not call a heart wherein is a ſenſe of *indiſpoſition* to good, a hard heart; except only in compariſon of that ſoftneſs, which is in it ſometimes, and which it ſhall attain unto, when it ſhall be perfectly ſanctified; in which reſpect it may be called hard. Whoſoever hath his *will* ſo wrought upon by the *Word*, that it is bent to obey God's will, if he knew how, and if he had power, this man, whatſoever hardneſs he feeleth, his heart is ſoft, *not hard*. The *Apoſtle* had a heart held in, and clogged with the *fleſh*, and *the law of his members*, that it made him to think himſelf *wretched*, becauſe he could be fully delivered from it, yet we know his heart was a found heart, Rom. vii. 24.

Amongſt

Amongſt thoſe that are ſanctified, there remaineth more *hardneſs* in the heart of ſome than in others; and what with the committing of groſs ſins, and a curſory and ſlight doing of good duties, and through neglect of means to ſoften it, the ſame mens hearts are *harder* at one time than at another, of which they have cauſe to complain, and for which they have cauſe to be humbled, and to uſe all means to ſoften it; but it is falſe, and dangerous, hence to conclude that ſuch are not in a *ſtate of grace* becauſe of ſuch hardneſs in the heart; for as GOD's perfecteſt Children on earth, *know but in part*, and believe but in part; *ſo their hearts are ſoftened but in part*, 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

§. X. *Fears of Apoſtacy, removed.*

THERE yet remain many, who though they cannot reply to the anſwers given to take away their falſe fears and doubts; but they are forced to yield, that they find that they *now are*, or at leaſt *have been* in a ſtate of grace; yet, this they fear, that they are *already fallen*, or ſhall *not perſevere*, but ſhall fall away before they die.

(1.) What kind of Chriſtians may apoſtatize.

Concerning *falling away* from grace, firſt know, that of thoſe that gave their names to Chriſt in outward profeſſion, there are *two* ſorts.

The firſt ſort are ſuch, who have received only the *common gifts of the Spirit*; as firſt, *illumination* of the mind to know the myſtery of Sal-

vation by Chriſt, and truly to aſſent unto it, Heb. vi. 4. 5.

Secondly, Together with this knowledge, is wrought in them by the ſame ſpirit a *lighter impreſſion* upon the affections, which the Scripture calleth a *taſte* of the heavenly gift, and of the good Word of GOD, and of the powers of the world to come, Heb. vi. 4, 5. By theſe gifts of the *Spirit*, the ſouls of theſe men are raiſed to an ability to do more than nature, and meer education can help them unto; carrying them farther than nature or art can do, by working in them a *kind* of ſpiritual change in their affections, and a *kind* of reformation of their lives. But yet all this while they are *not ingrafted into Chriſt*; neither are *deeply rooted*, as the corn in good ground, nor yet are *thoroughly changed* and renewed in the inward man, Mat. xiii. 21. they have at beſt only *a form of godlineſs, but have not the power thereof*, 2 Tim. iii. 5.

Now theſe men may, and often do *fall away*, not into ſome *particular* groſs ſins, of which they were ſometime after a ſort waſhed; but into a *courſe of ſinning*; falling from the very *form of godlineſs*, and may ſo utterly loſe thoſe gifts received, that they may in the end become very *Apoſtates*; yet *this is not properly a falling from grace*. It is only a falling away from the *common graces* or gifts of the *Spirit*, and from thoſe graces which they did *ſeem to have*, and which the *Church* out of her charity did judge them to have; but they fall not from *true ſaving grace*, for

ſor they never had any, Luke viii. 18. For if ever they had been indeed *incorporated into Chriſt Jeſus*, and had been found members of his body, and in this ſenſe had *ever been of us*, as the *Apoſtle John* ſpeaketh, then *they ſhould never have departed from us, but ſhould no doubt have continued with us*, 1 John ii. 19.

(2.) Of ſuch Chriſtians as ſhall perſevere.

The ſecond ſort of thoſe that have given their names to *Chriſt*, are *ſuch as are endued with true juſtifying faith*, and ſaving knowledge, and are *renewed in the ſpirit of their mind*; whereby thro' the gracious and powerful working of the ſanctifying Spirit, the Word maketh *a deeper impreſſion* upon the *will*, and the *affections*, cauſing them not only to *taſte*, but which is much more, to *feed and to drink deep* of the heavenly gift, and of the good Word of GOD, and of the powers of the world to come; ſo as to *digeſt* them unto the very changing and *transforming them, by the renewing of their minds*, Rom. xii. 2. and unto the *ſanctifying of them throughout in their whole man, both in ſpirit, ſoul, and body*; 1 Theſ. v. 23. ſo that CHRIST *is indeed formed in them*, and they are become *new creatures*, being made *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Cor. v. 17. 2 Pet. i. 4.

Now concerning theſe; it is not poſſible that any of them ſhould fall away, either *wholly*, or *for ever*.

(3.) How far a Chriſtian may decline in grace, and the Cauſes thereof.

Yet it muſt be granted, that they may *decline and fall back* ſo far, as to grieve the good ſpirit of GOD, and to offend and *provoke God* very much againſt them, and to make themſelves *deſerving of eternal death.* They may fall ſo far as to *interrupt the exerciſe of their faith,* Pſal. xxxii. 3. *wound their Conſcience,* Pſal. li. 8, 9, 10, 11. and may *looſe for a time the ſenſe of God's favour,* and *may cauſe* him, like a wiſe and good father, in *his juſt anger* to chide, correct, and threaten them, ſo that they may have cauſe to think that he will utterly reject them, and never receive them into his heavenly Kingdom; until by renewing their faith and repentance, they return into the right way, and do recover GOD's *loving kindneſs* towards them again.

That you may underſtand and believe this the better, conſider *what grace* GOD giveth unto his elect, and how, and from what they may fall: Alſo you muſt obſerve well the difference that is between the ſinning of the regenerate and unregenerate, together with the different condition wherein they ſtand, while they are in their ſins.

In the *firſt act of Converſion* (I ſpeak of men of years and diſcretion) GOD by his *Word* thro' his *holy Spirit doth infuſe an habit of holineſs,* namely, an habit of *Faith,* and all other *ſaving graces,* thus, every child of GOD receiveth that *holy anointing of the Spirit,* 1 John ii. 20. that which the *Scripture* calleth the *Seed remaining* in him, 1 John iii. 9.

Secondly,

Secondly, GOD by his gracious means and ordinances of the *Goſpel doth increaſe* his habit and theſe graces.

Now becauſe every man that is truly regenerate, doth carry about with him the *body of ſin* and corruption, and lieth open daily unto the *temptations* of the world, and the devil; a *truly regenerate man* may be drawn, not only into ſins of *ignorance*, and common frailty, but into *groſs ſins*; whereby the light and warmth of GOD's ſpirit may be ſo chilled and darkned, that he may break out into *preſumptuous ſins*. Yea, upon his negligent uſe, or omiſſion of the means of ſpiritual life and ſtrength, GOD may juſtly give him over to a fearful declination in grace and *backſliding*: Yet the truly regenerate fall only from *ſome degrees* of holineſs, and from certain *Acts* of holineſs; but *not from the infuſed habit of holineſs*; that *bleſſed ſeed* ever remaineth in him, 1 John iii. 9. His falling is either only into *particular* ſins, and into much failing in *particular* good duties, or if it be *towards* a more general defection, yet *it is never univerſal* from the *general purpoſe* of well-doing, into a *general courſe* of evil.

For the regenerate man doth never *ſo ſin*, as the unregenerate man doth, although for *matter* their ſins may be alike, yea, ſometimes thoſe of the regenerate, greater. There is great difference in their ſins, and *manner* of ſining.

1. Regenerate men may ſin out of ignorance, but they are not *willingly and wilfully* ignorant,

as are the unregenerate in ſome things or other, 2 Pet. iii. 5.

2. Regenerate men may commit, not only the *common ſins of infirmity*; into which, by reaſon of the remains of the luſts of the fleſh, they fall often; ſuch as raſh anger, diſcontent, doubts, fears, dulneſs, and deadneſs of heart in ſpiritual exerciſes, and inward evil thoughts and motions of all ſorts; but they may alſo commit *groſs ſins*, ſuch as an open and direct breach of God's Commandments; yet *thoſe are done againſt their general purpoſe*, as *David* did, for *he had ſaid he would look to his ways*; Pſal. xxxix. 1. and *he had determined to keep God's righteous judgments*, Pſal. cxix. 106. Yea, many times they are done againſt their *particular purpoſes*, as *Peter's denial* of his Maſter, Mat. 26. 35. They are not uſually contrived, or thought on before, but *fallen into by occaſion*, or are *forced* thereunto by the violent corruption of the affections, or ſenſual appetites, 2 Sam. xi. 2. Gal. vi. 1. Moreover, they do not make a *trade and cuſtom* of ſin: Theſe kinds of ſins *do not paſs them any long time unobſerved:* But are ſeen, bewailed, confeſſed to God, and prayed againſt; and are burdenſome and grievous to them, making them to think worſe of themſelves, and to become *baſe* in their own eyes becauſe of them. But it is directly otherwiſe, uſually, with the *unregenerate* in all theſe particulars, Gen. xxvii. 41. Micah ii. 1.

3. The regenerate may not only commit ſins *groſs for matter*, but *preſumptuous for manner*, namely,

namely, they may commit them not only againſt knowledge and *conſent*, but with a *premeditated deliberation*, and termination of will, as *David* did in the *murther of Uriah*, 2 Sam. xi. 8, to 25. But it is *ſeldom* that a child of GOD doth commit *preſumptuous ſins*; his general determination and *Prayer* is againſt them, Pſal. xix. 13. It is with much ſtrife and *reluctance* of will, and with *little delight* and content, in compariſon. He never ſins preſumptuouſly, but when he is drawn thereunto, or *forced thereupon by ſome overſtrong corruption and violent temptation for the time*, as *David* was, being over eagerly bent to hide his ſin, and to ſave his credit: For *if he could by any means have gotten Uriah home to his wife*, he would never have cauſed him to be ſlain, 2 Sam. xi. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13. And although *preſumptuous ſins* caſt him into a deadneſs, and benumbedneſs of heart and ſpirit, *in which he may lie for a time ſpeechleſs, and prayerleſs, as it was with David*; yet he feeleth that all is not well with him, until he have *again* made his peace with GOD, Pſal. xxxii. 3, 4. And when he hath the miniſtry of GOD's powerful word, to make him plainly ſee his ſin, then he will *humble* himſelf and *reform it*, 2 Sam. xii. 13. Pſal. 51. The unregenerate not ſo.

4. Laſtly, a regenerate man may fall one degree further, namely, *he may ſo loſe his firſt love*, that he may (though not fall into utter Apoſtacy) yet decline from good very far, even to a *coldneſs* and *remiſneſs* in good duties, even in the

exerciſes of religion, if not to an *utter omiſſion* of them for a time. The life and vigour of his graces may ſuffer *ſenſible eclipſes*, and decay. *Aſa, a good King*, yet went apace this way, 2 Chron. xv. 17. as appeareth by his *impriſoning* the good Prophet, and in oppreſſing the people in his *latter days*, and in truſting to the *Phyſicians*, and not ſeeking to *God* to be cured of his diſeaſe, 2 Chron. xvi. 10, 12. And *Solomon the truly beloved of GOD in his youth*, went farther back, 2 Sam. xii. 24. Neh. xiii. 26. giving himſelf to all manner of *vanities*, and in his *old age* did ſo dote upon his many wives, that he fell to *Idolatry*, Eccleſ. 2. or at leaſt became acceſſary, by building them *Idol Temples*, and *accompanying them to idolatrous Services*, inſomuch that it is ſaid, they *turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his Father*, 1 Kings xi. 3, to 20. Yet there is a wide difference between theſe *backſlidings*, and the *Apoſtacies* of men unregenerate. For theſe do not *approve* nor *applaud* themſelves in thoſe evil courſes, into which they are backſlidden, when (out of the heat of temptation) they do think of them; neither have the regenerate *full content in them*, but find vanity, and vexation in them, as *Solomon* did even in the days of his vanity. They do not in this their declined eſtate, *hate the good generally*, which once they *loved*, but look back upon it with approbation; and their *heart* ſecretly inclineth unto a *liking of it*, and *of them that are*,

as

as they once were; ſo that in the midſt of their bad eſtate, they have a *mind to return*, but that they are yet ſo hampered, and entangled with the ſnares of ſin, that they cannot get out. Laſtly, *they* in *God's* good time, by his grace, *do break forth out of this Eclipſe of grace*, by the light whereof they ſee their wretchedneſs and folly, and are aſhamed of their backſliding and revolting; and they again *do their firſt works*. And with much ado, *recover* their former joys and comforts, though it may be never with that life, luſtre, and beauty, as in former times; and that as a juſt correction of their ſin, that they may be kept *humble*, and be made to *look better* to their ſtanding all the days of their life by it. It is not ſo with the hypocrital profeſſors, who were never truly regenerate; but quite contrary, as you may obſerve in the *Apoſtacies* of *Saul*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 3, 6, 7, &c. and of King *Joaſh*, and *Simon Magus*, and *others*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, 18, to 23.

(4.) The difference between the falls of the ſincere and inſincere.

Theſe differences riſe hence, becauſe that the *common graces* of the unregenerate are but as *flaſhes of lightning*, or as the fading light of Meteors, which blaze but for a while; and are like the waters of *Land-floods*, which, becauſe they have *no ſpring* to feed them, run not long, and in time may quite be dried up.

But the *ſaving graces* of the regenerate receive their light, warmth, and life from the *Sun of righteouſneſs*,

righteouſneſs, therefore can never be totally or finally *eclipſed*. And they do riſe from that *Well* and *Spring* of living Water which cannot be drawn dry, or ſo dammed up, or ſtopt, but that it will run more or leſs, unto eternal life, John iv. 14.

As the regenerate man doth not ſin in ſuch a manner as the unregenerate, *with all his heart*, ſo neither is he when he hath ſinned in the ſame *ſtate* and *condition*, which the unregenerate are in. He is in the *Condition of a Son*, who notwithing his failings, *abideth in the houſe for ever*; but not as the other, who, being *no ſon* but *a ſervant*, is for his miſdemeanor turned out, and *abideth not in the houſe for ever*, 1 John viii. 35.

Although the regenerate as well as the unregenerate do draw upon themſelves, by their ſins, the *ſimple guilt of eternal death*, yet this *guilt is not accounted*, neither doth it *redound to the perſon of the truly regenerate* as it doth to the others; becauſe *Chriſt Jeſus* hath ſo ſatisfied, and doth make *interceſſion for his own*, that his death is made effectual for them, but not for the other, John xvii. 9, 15, 20. Their *Juſtification* and *Adoption by Chriſt remain unalterable*, although many benefits flowing from thence are, for a while, juſtly *ſuſpended*; they remain *children* ſtill, though under their *Father's anger*; as *Abſalom* remained a *ſon* uncaſt off, not diſ-inherited by *David*, when yet his Father would not let him come into his preſence, 2 Sam. xiv. 24. This *ſpiritual leproſy of ſin*, into which GOD's Children fall, may

may cauſe them to be ſuſpended from the uſe and *comfortable poſſeſſion* of the Kingdom of GOD, and from the enjoyment of the *priviledges* thereof, until they be *cleanſed* of their ſin by renewed faith and repentance. Yet, as the *Leper in the Law*, had ſtill *right* to his houſe and goods, although he was ſhut out of the City for his Leproſy; ſo *the truly regenerate never loſe their right to the Kingdom of Heaven* by their ſins, Lev. xiii. 46. 2 Chron. xxvi. 21. For every true member of Chriſt is knit unto Chriſt by ſuch *everlaſting bonds*, whether we reſpect the *relative union of Chriſt* with his members by faith to *Juſtification*, which after it is once made by the *ſpirit of Adoption*, admitteth of no breach or alteration by any means, Rom. viii. 15, 16, 17, 35. or whether we reſpect the *real union* of the *Spirit*, whence floweth *Sanctification*, which though it may ſuffer decay, and admitteth of ſome alteration of degrees, being not ſo ſtrong at one time, as at another, yet can never quite be broken off, as hath been proved, 1 John ii. 27. iii. 9. theſe bands, I ſay, are ſo ſtrong, and laſting, that all the powers of ſin, Satan, and Hell itſelf *cannot ſeperate* the weakeſt true member *from Chriſt*, or *from his love*, or *from God's love towards him in Chriſt*, Rom. viii. 33, unto the end.

This ſtrength of grace, that keepeth men from falling totally or finally from CHRIST, doth not depend upon the *ſtrength* or *will* of him that *ſtandeth*, but on the *election* and *determination* of him that *calleth*, Rom. ix. 11.

(5.) Why

(5.) Why the faithful ſhall not finally Apoſtatize.

And whereas it may be demanded why a man, who being at his higheſt degree of holineſs, did yet *fall* back more than half way, may not as well, or rather fall *quite* away?

I anſwer, It is not in reſpect of the nature *of inherent holineſs* in him; for *Adam had holineſs in perfection*, yet *fell* quite from it, Gen. i. 27. iii. There is nothing in the nature of this grace and holineſs, (excepting only in the *root* whence it ſpringeth) but that a man may now alſo fall *wholly* from it. But it is becauſe *grace is now ſettled in man upon better terms.* For the *little ſtrength* we receive in regeneration, is (in point of perſeverance) ſtronger than the *great ſtrength* which the firſt *Adam* received in his Creation. *Adam* was perfectly, but *changeably* holy; GOD's children in regeneration are made imperfectly, but *unchangeably* holy, Jer. xxxii. 40. This ſtability of grace now conſiſteth in this, in that all who by faith, and by the holy Spirit are ingrafted and incorporated into *Chriſt the ſecond Adam*, have the ſpring, and root of their grace founded *in him*, and *not in themſelves*, as the firſt *Adam* had, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Ephe. i. 4. They are *eſtabliſhed in Chriſt.* Wherefore, all that are actual members of CHRIST cannot fall from grace *altogether*; *for as Chriſt died to ſin once, and being raiſed from the dead dieth no more*, Rom. vi. 5, to 12. ſo every true member of Chriſt, having part with him in the firſt reſurrection, *die no more,*

but

but live for ever with Chriſt. For all that are once begotten again unto a lively faith, and hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, *are kept (not by their own power)* unto *Salvation*, but *by the power of God through faith in Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 5.

Now, that a man effectually called, can never fall *wholly*, or *for ever* from a ſtate of grace, I, in few words, reaſon thus: If GOD's *Counſel*, on which man's Salvation is founded, *be ſure* and *unchangeable*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. and if his *calling be without repentance*, Rom. xi. 29.

If GOD's love be unchangeable and altereth not, but *whom God once loveth* actually, *him he loveth to the end*, John xiii. 1.

If *Chriſt's office* of Prophet, Prieſt, and King, in his teaching, ſatisfying, and making interceſſion for, and in his governing his people, be after the order of *Melchiſedeck*, *unchangeable and everlaſting*, he ever living to make interceſſion for them, Heb. vii. 24, 25. vii. 21. and *if his undertaking* in all theſe reſpects with his Father, not to loſe any whom he giveth him, cannot be fruſtrate, John vi. 39. Luke xxii. 32. John xvii. 15.

If the *Seal and Earneſt of the Spirit be a conſtant Seal*, which cannot be razed; but *ſealeth* all in whom it dwelleth *unto the day of Redemption*, Ephe. i. 13, 14.

If the *Word of Truth* wherewith the regenerate are begotten, be an *immortal ſeed*, which when once

once it hath taken root, doth *live for ever*, 1 Pet. i. 23, 25.

If *God be conſtant and faithful in his promiſe*, and *omnipotent in his power*, to make good this his word and promiſe, ſaying, *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from my people and children, to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me*, Jer. xxxii. 40.

Then from all, and from each of theſe propoſitions, I conclude, that *a man once indeed a member of Chriſt, and indeed in a ſtate of grace, ſhall never totally or finally fall away.*

The patrons of the doctrine of *falling from grace*, when they cannot anſwer the invincible arguments which are brought to prove the certainty of a man's ſtanding in a ſtate of Salvation; they make a loud cry in certain *popular objections*, ſuch as are very apt to take with *ſimple*, and *unſtable* people.

They firſt come with *ſuppoſitions*, and aſk this and like queſtions. If *David* and *Peter* had died in the act of their groſs ſins, whether ſhould they have been ſaved or no?

I anſwer, we have an *Engliſh Proverb*, What if the ſky fall? *Propoſitions* are but weakly grounded on *meer Suppoſitions*. Should they aſk, *What if they had died; in the act of their ſin?* Well, ſay they had died in the *act* of their ſin, they could not die in their *impenitence*; they in an inſtant might return to GOD, and rely on CHRIST, or at leaſt, if ſudden death had ſurpriſed them, their

their *general* repentance and faith in Chriſt which they had before their fall, would have been ſufficient for them. For their *Juſtification* and *Adoption* was not impaired, though their *Sanctification* was diminiſhed. But we muſt believe God's promiſe, and the iſſue will be this (tho' we cannot always tell how) that *God will ſo guide his children with his Counſel, that afterwards he will receive them to Glory*, Pſal. lxxiii. 24.

Secondly, They object violently, that this doctrine of *not falling* wholly from God, and of certainty of Salvation, after a man is once in a ſtate of Grace, is *a doctrine of licentiouſneſs and carnal liberty*, cauſing men to be *negligent* in the uſe of means of grace, and *careleſs* in their Chriſtian courſe; for when they once know they ſhall *not* be damned, they will live as they liſt; ſay they.

Firſt, I *appeal to ancient and daily experience*, both in Miniſters and People. For thoſe who have been *moſt aſſured* of God's favour, and of their Salvation, have been and are *more frequent* in preaching, more diligent in hearing, and in the uſe of all good means of ſalvation, than thoſe of the other opinion, and have been *moſt holy* and moſt ſtrict in their lives. But the doctrine of theſe, that teach falling totally and finally from grace, they being the patrons of free-will, on which all the fabrick of their building hangeth, is rather a doctrine opening a door to licentiouſneſs. For thinking that they may convert if they *will*, they judge themſelves not ſo unwiſe

unwiſe, but that they *will*, and *ſhall* convert before they die, therefore they take liberty to live as they liſt in the mean time.

Secondly, the *Scriptures*, the *nature of ſaving faith*, and all *ſound judgment* do reaſon quite contrary; for the *certainty of the end* doth not hinder, but excite and encourage men in *the uſe of all good means*, which conduce unto that end. *Chriſt* knew certainly that he ſhould attain his end of Mediatorſhip, *viz.* the ſalvation of mens ſouls, this was no cauſe, why he might be *negligent* in the means. Was there ever any more earneſt in prayer, or more longing to finiſh his work, than our *bleſſed Saviour*, although he was *infallibly certain* that he ſhould ſave and glorify man, and that GOD would glorify him? John xvii. 1. When *Daniel knew certainly* the time of deliverance out of Captivity, he was not hereby carnally *ſecure, and careleſs in the uſe of all good means to haſten it*; but betaketh himſelf to faſting and prayers, that GOD's people *might* be delivered, Dan. ix. 1. Becauſe GOD had aſſured *David* that he would build him an houſe, *therefore* (ſaith he) *thy ſervant hath found in his heart to pray*, viz. that thou wouldeſt eſtabliſh it, 2 Sam. vii. 27. What child is there that hath an ingenuous diſpoſition or any real goodneſs in him, will ſlight, and neglect to pleaſe his Father, becauſe he hath *aſſured* him of a large inheritance, or becauſe his inheritance is entailed upon him?

None but thoſe who are indeed *deſtitute of* grace will ever *wreſt and pervert the doctrines of*

grace,

grace, making them to be unto them Licenſes, and *occaſions of wantonneſs and ſin*, Jude 4. Rom. v. 21. So as to ſay, if *where ſin abounded, grace abounded much more*; then, *Let us ſin that grace may abound*, Rom. vi. 1, 15. And if we are *not under the Law but under grace*, then *let us ſin, becauſe we are not under the Law but under grace.*

But as any man hath *truth* of grace, the more he knoweth it, the more he reaſoneth *otherwiſe*. *Ezra* having not only a hope, but the poſſeſſion of that which GOD had promiſed; he doth not ſay, now we may live as we liſt, but ſaith, *ſhould we again break thy Commandments*, Ezra ix. 13, 14. An honeſt heart maketh the ſame inferences from ſpiritual deliverances. The *Scripture* from abundance of GOD's grace, and from the *certainty* of it, doth reaſon for grace and for obedience, *How ſhall we that are dead to ſin, live yet therein*, Rom. vi. 2. And in another place the Apoſtle *John* ſaith, *We know that we are the children of God*, &c. but what is the inference? Is it we may now ſin, and live as we liſt, becauſe we know that when *Chriſt* ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him? *No*, the holy *Apoſtle* inferreth this, *he that hath this hope, purifieth himſelf as he is pure*, 1 John iii. 1, 2, 3.

§. II.

§. XI. *Removing ſundry Doubts in particular, about falling from Grace.*

NOTWITHSTANDING all that hath been ſaid, concerning the *certainty of perſeverance in grace*, after the Chriſtian has been truly converted unto GOD; yet many will doubt they ſhall *fall away*, (1.) Becauſe they fear that all their Religion hath been but in *Hypocriſy*, and in form only, but *not in power*; now ſuch may fall away, as hath been ſaid.

If it were true, that all which you have done were in *Hypocriſy*, then until you *repent* of your Hypocriſy, and *be upright*, you may juſtly fear as much; yet you muſt not deſperately conclude, that you ſhall fall away from your profeſſion; but ſhould rather be quickned and ſtired up by this fear to *abandon Hypocriſy*, and to *ſerve the LORD in ſincerity*; and hereby *make your calling and election ſure*, that you may not fall; and then you have GOD's word for it, that *you ſhall never finally periſh*, Pſal. lv. 1, 2, 5.

Many think that they are *Hypocrites*, which yet are ſincere; wherefore try whether you be an Hypocrite or upright, by the *ſigns of uprightneſs* before delivered, Chap. 12. §. 1.

Only, for the preſent, note this; when was it known, that an Hypocrite did ſo *ſee his Hypocriſy*, as to have it a burden to him, and to be weary of it, and to confeſs it, and bewail it, and to aſk forgiveneſs heartily of GOD; and above

bove all things to labour to be upright? If you find yourſelves thus diſpoſed *againſt Hypocriſy*, and *for uprightneſs*, although I would have you humbled for the remainder of Hypocriſy which you diſcern to be in you; yet chiefly I would have you to be thankful to GOD, and to take comfort in this that you *feel it*, and *diſlike* it: thank GOD therefore for your *uprightneſs*, comfort yourſelves in it, and cheriſh and nouriſh it in you, and fear not.

(2.) Fears becauſe of the decay of grace and comfort, removed.

Others object, that they are *already fallen* far backward in religion; they do not feel ſo much zeal and fervency of affection to goodneſs, nor againſt wickedneſs; nor do they now enjoy thoſe comforts and clear apprehenſions of GOD's favour towards them, as they did in their *firſt Converſion*.

It may be that you are *declined* in the ways of Godlineſs, and *loſt your firſt love*, from whence all theſe inconveniencies have ariſen; but may it not befall any child of GOD to have loſt his firſt love, as well as a *whole Church*, the *Church of Epheſus?* Rev. ii. 4. You could not from thence conclude that *Epheſus* was *no* Church, neither can you hence conclude, that you are *none* of GOD's children, or that you ſhall not hold out unto the end. But if it be ſo, be willing to ſee your ſin, and to be humbled, and repent heartily of it; following the Counſel of *Chriſt*, *remember*

member whence you are fallen, repent, and do your firſt works, Rev. ii. 5. (and certainly *God's child* ſhall have grace to repent) Pſal. ixxiii. 24. lxxxix. 30, 32. then you, *enduring to the end, ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death*, notwithſtanding that ſin of yours in loſing your firſt love, Rev. ii. 11.

But it may, and it often doth happen, that a true child of God doth in his own feeling think he hath *leſs* grace now, than at firſt, when it is not ſo; the *reaſons* of his miſtake may be theſe.

At the firſt a truly regenerate man doth not ſee ſo much *as afterwards* he doth. At firſt you had indeed the light of the Sun, but as at the firſt *dawning* of the day, whereby you ſaw your *greater* enormities, and reformed many things, yea (as you thought) *all*: but now ſince, the Sun being riſen higher towards the perfect day, ſhineth more clearly, it comes to paſs, that in theſe beams of the Sun (as when it ſhineth into an houſe) you may ſee more *motes*, and very many things amiſs in your heart and life, which were not *diſcovered*, nor *diſcerned* before; you muſt not ſay you had *leſs* ſin then, becauſe you *ſaw* it not, or more ſin now, becauſe you *ſee* more. For as the eye of your mind ſees every day more clearly, and as your hearts grow every day more holy; ſo will ſin *appear* unto you every day more and more, for your conſtant humiliation, and daily reformation. For a *Chriſtian*, if he go not backward, ſeeth in his advanced life-time more clearly, what is yet before him to be done,

done, and with what an high degree of affection he ought to ſerve GOD, and to what an height of perfection he ought to raiſe his thoughts in his holy aim, which in the infancy of his Chriſtianity he could not ſee; hence his error; even as it is uſual for a *novice in the Univerſity*, when he hath read over a few *Syſtems* of the *Arts*, &c. to conceit better of himſelf for *Scholarſhip*, than when he hath more profound knowledge in thoſe *Arts afterwards*, for then he ſeeth his difficulties, which his weak knowledge being not able to pry into, paſſed over with preſumption of his knowing all.

Secondly, Good deſires, and enjoyments of comforts are *ſudden*, *ſtrange*, and *new* at firſt, which ſuddenneſs, ſtrangeneſs, and newneſs of change, out of a ſtate of corruption and death, into the ſtate of grace and life, is *more ſenſible*, and leaveth behind a *deeper impreſſion*, than can poſſibly be, after ſuch time that a man is accuſtomed to it: or that can be added by the increaſe of the ſame grace. A man that cometh out of a cloſe, dark, and ſtinking *Dungeon*, is more ſenſible of the benefit of a ſweet air, of light, and liberty the *firſt week*, than he is *ſeven years after* he hath enjoyed theſe to the full. Let a mean man be raiſed ſuddenly and undeſervedly unto the ſtate and glory of a *King*, he will be more ſenſible of the change, and will be more raviſhed with the glory of his eſtate for the *firſt week*, or month, than at *ten years end*, when he is accuſtomed to the heart and ſtate of *King*, yea

yea more, than if at ten years end, *double* power and glory ſhould be conferred on him.

Thirdly, GOD for ſpecial cauſes is peculiarly tender of his *Scholars*, when they firſt enter into *Chriſt's School*; in like manner doth he deal with his *Babes* in CHRIST, before they can go alone, Iſa. lxvi. 12.

Do not wiſe *School-maſters* (the better to encourage their young and fearful *Scholars*) ſhew more outward expreſſions of affection and kindneſs towards them the *firſt week* that they come to School, yea, it may be, ſhew more countenance and familiarity towards them their *firſt* week, than ever after, until the time that they ſend them to the Univerſity? And hath not a *young child* more attendance, and fewer falls in his, or her *infancy*, while it is carried in the arms, or led in the hands of his father or mother, than when it goeth alone? But when it goeth alone, it receiveth many a fall, and many a knock; yet this doth not argue *leſs love* in the parents, or *leſs ſtrength* in the child now, than when it was but one or two years old.

Fourthly, Although GOD's trees, *planted in his Courts*, always ſhould and uſually do in their advanced years, bear *more* and *better fruit*, than they did or could do in their youth; yet theſe through a *falſe apprehenſion* of things, may judge themſelves to be more barren in their age, than they were in their youth. It may be, you feel not in you that vigour, heat, and ability to perform

perform good duties now in *age*, as you did in your *younger days*; but may not this ariſe from *natural defects?* as for want of memory, quickneſs of thought, or of natural heat and vigour of your ſpirits, all which are excellent *hand-maids* to grace. You may obſerve this in older Chriſtians, who have long walked with GOD, that, in their age, they have theſe *natural* defects recompenced with better and more laſting fruit; as with *more fixedneſs* and *ſoundneſs of Judgment*, more *humility*, more *patience* and *experience*, wherewith their grey hairs are crowned in the way of righteouſneſs, 1 John ii. 12, 13. look for *theſe* and labour to improve yourſelves in theſe in your age, and theſe will prove more beneficial to you, than your freſh feelings, and your ſenſibly felt zeal in your younger times, Prov. xvi. 31.

(3.) Fears of backſliding and apoſtacy, from the examples of others, removed.

There are yet others (it may be the ſame) when they obſerve that many who are of longer ſtanding than themſelves, who have had much more knowledge, and have made a farther progreſs in the practice of godlineſs, than they, *are yet fallen fearfully* into ſome groſs ſin, or ſins; yea, ſome of them are *departed from* the faith, and have embraced with *Demas* this preſent World, either in the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, or pride of life, 2 Tim. iv. 10. They are ſome of them fallen to *Popery*, or to ſome other *falſe Religion*; wherefore they fear that *they ſhall*

fall away alſo, and that their hearts will deceive them in the end.

That the *falls of others* ſhould make all that ſtand *to take heed leaſt they fall*, is the expreſs will of *God*, 1 Cor. x. 12. It is an high point of wiſdom for you to obſerve and do it. Likewiſe to fear ſo much as to quicken you to *watchfulneſs* and *prayer*, is an holy and commendable fear; but to fear your *total or final falling away*, only becauſe ſome that have made profeſſion of the ſame Religion *are fallen*, is without ground.

For it may be thoſe which you ſee to be fallen away, never had any other than *a form of godlineſs*, and never had no more than the common graces and gifts of the *Spirit*. For if they be quite fallen from the faith, it is becauſe *they were never ſoundly of the faith*, 1 John ii. 19. Moreover, grant ſome of them which are fallen had ſaving grace; may they not with *David* and *Solomon* recover their falls? Pſal. li. This you ſhould hope, and pray for, rather than by occaſion of their falls, to trouble yourſelf with *falſe* and *fruitleſs fear*.

(4.) Fears of apoſtacy in times of perſecution.

Laſtly, ſome yet fear that if *perſecution* ſhould come becauſe of the Word and Religion which they do profeſs, that they ſhould never hold out, but ſhall *fall away*.

Do you thus fear? Then buckle cloſe unto you the *compleat armour with the girdle of ſincerity*, exerciſe yourſelves *before-hand* at your ſpiritual weapons; with all watchfulneſs preſerve your peace

peace with GOD, under whom at ſuch times you muſt ſhelter yourſelves, and by whoſe power it is that you muſt ſtand in that evil day, Epheſ. vi. 11, 13, 14. But know, that a child of GOD need not *fear perſecution* with ſuch diſcouraging and diſtruſtful fear, neither ſhould you; for this will but give *advantage* to your enemies of all ſorts, and will make your hands feeble, and your hearts faint. Raiſe up your ſpirits, and chaſe away your fears thus. Conſider the *goodneſs of your cauſe*. Conſider the *wiſdom*, *valour*, and *power* of him that hath already redeemed you with his blood, who hath already led captivity captive, who is your *Champion*, and hath engaged himſelf for you, until he hath brought you to glory; I mean *Chriſt Jeſus*, who is *Lord of Hoſts*, under whoſe Banner you fight in the whole *Chriſtian warfare*. Conſider likewiſe the *faithfulneſs of God's promiſe*, made to all his Children, concerning his preſence and help in time of perſecution: commanding them not to *take thought* concerning it, having promiſed to give them a *mouth and wiſdom, which all their adverſaries ſhall not be able to reſiſt*, Luke xxii. 14, 15. Conſider laſt of all, the bleſſed *experience*, which the *holy Martyrs* have had of GOD's love and help (according to his promiſe) in their greateſt perſecutions, and *fiery trials*. Obſerve the wiſdom and courage of thoſe who in their own nature were but ſimple and fearful. Read the *Book of Martyrs* next unto the *Scriptures* for this purpoſe, and through GOD's grace, though

you were naturally as fearful as *Hares*, when you ſhall be called to it, you ſhall be as courageous as *Lions*.

It is not hard for you to know now, whether you ſhall be able in time of *perſecution* to ſtand faſt and not fall away. If you now in the *peace of the Goſpel*, can *deny yourſelves in your luſts*, in love to GOD, and for *Conſcience ſake* towards him, and can rather part with them, than with the ſincere adherence to CHRIST, then you ſhall be able, and you will *deny yourſelves in the matter of your life*, if you be put to it in time of perſecution, rather than deny CHRIST. For this firſt is as difficult, as the latter; and the *ſame* love to GOD, and Conſcience of duty, which doth *now* uphold you and bear you through the one, will *then* rather uphold, and bear you thorough the other. For in times of trial and ſuffering for his name, you may look for his more *ſpecial* aſſiſtance.

Wherefore I wiſh that all that are troubled with *falſe fears*, to reſt ſatisfied in theſe anſwers to their doubts: and I would have them give over calling their *Election*, *God's love*, their *Juſtification*, or their final *perſeverance* into queſtion: but rather fill yourſelves with hope and aſſurance of GOD's favour, (I ſpeak ſtill to burdened Conſciences) comforting yourſelves therein; abounding in *thankſgiving to GOD* for what you have, rather than *repining* in yourſelves, for what you want.

(5.) Fears

(5.) Fears ariſing from the deceitfulneſs of the heart, removed.

Yet I know there are ſome (as if they were made all of doubting) will object, my heart is *deceitful*, I doubt all *is not*, I doubt all *will not* be well with me.

If your heart be *deceitful*, why then do you *believe it*, when it caſteth in theſe doubts, and why do you truſt to it more than unto the evidence of the Word of GOD, and the judgment of his faithful Miniſters; who by the Word, give moſt *ſatisfying reſolutions* to your doubts? which alſo miniſter unto you matter of *aſſured* hope and comfort.

(6.) Doubts from preſent weakneſs and fears, anſwered.

Another will ſay, I do even *faint* in my troubles, and in my fears, and I am ready to give all over, what ſhall I do? What would you have me to do?

Your caſe is not ſingular, many others have been, and are in this caſe; it is no otherwiſe with you than it was with the *Pſalmiſt*, and *Jonah*; do as they in that caſe did; Firſt give not over, but *remember God, call upon him, give him no reſt.* Secondly, *truſt on him, and wait until you have comfort*, Pſal. xxvii. 23, 24. That holy man of GOD ſaid, *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but GOD is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever*, Pſal. lxxiii. 26. Likewiſe *Jonah*, *I ſaid I am caſt out of thy ſight, yet I will look again towards thine holy Temple*, Jona. ii. 4, 7. And

again, *when my ſoul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came up unto thee, into thine holy Temple,* that is as if he had ſaid unto *God, I prayed unto thee in the name of Chriſt, and thou didſt hear me.* When you walk in the darkneſs of affliction and inward diſcontent, *He, to whom God gave the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in due ſeaſon to him that is weary,* giveth you counſel, ſaying, *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no light? Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God,* Iſa. l. 10. Pſal. xxvii. 23, 24. Obſerve it, he that *feareth* the Lord, and *obeyeth* his voice, yet may be in darkneſs and have no light; what darkneſs is this, but that ſpoken of ver. 4. *viz.* an afflicted weary ſoul, without light of *comfort?* And men, thus diſtreſſed, muſt truſt in the Lord, and ſtay on their GOD.

(7.) Fears of not enjoying the promiſes, for not ſufficiently performing the conditions.

Yet theſe poor ſouls (who whether they ſhould be ſharply reproved, or pitied more, is hard to ſay; I am ſure they deſerve both) will yet object ſtrongly. It is true, *they that fear God and obey him, may truſt in the Lord, and ſtay upon God.* And he hath made moſt rich promiſes to them that know him, that do fear and obey him. See, *here is a promiſe with condition* (ſaith one) *I muſt fear the Lord,* I muſt *obey him,* I know GOD will do his part, if I could do mine, but *theſe I do not*; what warrant then have I to look for comfort,

or

or any thing at GOD's hand, for his promiſes belong not to me?

I know well that with this doubt the *Devil* doth much perplex the afflicted ſouls of many of *God's deareſt children*, and by it keepeth off all the remedies which *God's Word* can afford, ſo that they faſten not upon them to do them good. For the *propoſitions* of the Word are eaſily aſſented unto; but all the matter lyeth in the *application* to the wound. It is ſtill put off with this, this is true which you ſay, *but it belongeth not to me*, for *I do not fulfil the condition* required on my part.

Wherefore that I may, by GOD's help, fully ſatisfy this doubt, and quite remove this ſcruple of ſcruples. It muſt be carefully obſerved, that GOD maketh *ſome promiſes with condition*. And that he maketh *ſome abſolute promiſes* without any condition on man's part. Would you know, what promiſes only are made with *condition* to be fulfilled on man's part, and what promiſes are *abſolute*?

Know that many promiſes in the *Word* do *concern the end of a man's faith*, which is *Salvation* itſelf, and the *recompence and reward of well-doing*, whether corporal or ſpiritual, whether it be temporal or eternal. Theſe are made with *Condition*; namely, to thoſe, and only to thoſe that *believe* in the name of *God*, and that do *love*, *fear*, and *obey him*. For it doth not conſiſt with the wiſdom and holineſs of GOD to beſtow heaven,

and his good bleſſings upon any, untill they be thus qualified and made meet to receive them.

Know ſecondly, and obſerve it diligently, that there are many promiſes in the Word which *concern GOD's free giving the ſaid graces of fear and obedience, required as means to obtain the former promiſes of good things*, even *an ability to perform the condition in the forementioned promiſes*; I mean not ſuch a power as that they may fulfill the condition if they will, or if they will not they may chooſe. But GOD hath made *abſolute* promiſes to give men power actually to *will and to do* the things required in the conditional promiſes, in ſuch a manner that he will accept both *will and deed*, and in ſome caſes the *will* for the *deed*, ſo as to fulfill thoſe his *conditional* promiſes of Salvation, &c. Heb. viii. 10. Phil. ii. 12.

That you may underſtand me fully, I will inſtance in ſome of the chief promiſes in this kind made to every member of Chriſt without exception. *This is the Covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael*, (that is, with the whole Church, of GOD, Heb. viii. 10.) *a new Covenant, and I will put my law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. He doth not ſay, I will be their *God, if they will be his people*, but ſaith abſolutely, *they ſhall be my people*. Which that they might be, both there and elſewhere, he hath ſaid abſolutely without Condition; *they ſhall be all taught of God*, Iſa. liv. 13. John vi. 45. He promiſed likewiſe ſaying,

I will

I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and you ſhall be clean, from all your filthineſs, and from all your Idols I will cleanſe you. A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put into you, and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh. And I will put my ſpirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and ye ſhall keep my Judgments and do them, &c. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. And *not for your ſake do I this*, ſaith he, *be it known to you*, be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O houſe of *Iſrael*, ver. 32. And again he ſaith, *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me*, Jer. xxxii. 40. Note this in very many places, God promiſeth his bleſſing to them that *fear him and keep his Commandments:* there he promiſeth with *Condition:* here he *abſolutely* promiſeth thoſe on whom he intendeth to beſtow theſe bleſſings, that he will *put his fear in their heart*, that they may be *capable* of them: And, which is more, to the end that men might *repent, believe, and live godly*; which is the *Condition* to which the promiſe of forgiveneſs and Salvation is made, God declareth that he hath *raiſed Chriſt and exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give this faith and repentance*, that their ſins may be forgiven, and their ſouls ſaved by him, Acts v. 30, 31. I pray conſider well whether all theſe promiſes of this ſort be not made *abſolutely* on God's

part, and without any Condition on man's part. Wherefore, whereas GOD hath made many excellent promiſes of free and great rewards; as, to hear the prayers, and to fulfill the deſire of them that fear him, and to give life and glory to them that believe, and obey him, and that do hold faſt the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope to the end, you ſee that here are promiſes of the *firſt ſort made with a kind of Condition*; But that GOD will give his People both to will and to do theſe things *required* in the condition, he hath *abſolutely promiſed*; as hath been clearly proved.

If you yet reply and ſay, are not theſe latter promiſes made under condition of our *well uſing* the outward means thereof, ſuch as hearing of the word, prayer, &c.

GOD indeed commandeth theſe means to be *uſed*; and, if we perform them aright, GOD will not fail to bleſs the good uſe of theſe means; but this *well uſing* them is not in our own power, neither is it a *Condition for which* GOD is neceſſarily bound to give Faith, and to plant his fear in our hearts, any otherwiſe than by his promiſe; but it is a *Condition by which* he hath ordained uſually to give theſe graces to all which in the uſe of them ſhall *wait upon him* for them. For both the *giving of his word*, and the *giving us minds* to hear the word, and *the opening of the heart* to attend, and the *convincing and alluring of the heart* to obey; *depend all upon thoſe abſolute promiſes*,

promiſes, they ſhall be taught of God, and the reſt before-mentioned, Iſa. liv. 13.

Wherefore, let none of years think that without hearing, praying, and the *right uſing* of God's ordinances, that ever they ſhall have *faith*, and the *fear of God* wrought in them, or ſhall ever come to Heaven. For we are commanded to pray, hear, &c. and that in Faith, *or elſe we can never look to receive any thing of the* LORD, Heb. iv. 2. James i. 7. And doing what lieth in man's power, in the right uſing the means of Salvation is of *great conſequence*, although it be not a ſufficient cauſe to move God neceſſarily to give grace; for I am perſwaded that the beſt ſhould have *more* grace, if they would do what in them lay continually to make *good uſe* of the outward means of grace; and the worſt ſhould be guilty of *leſs* ſin, if they would do what in them lay to *profit* by the good uſe of the ſaid means. And the *neglect*, or the *abuſing of the means*, is a ſufficient cauſe why God ſhould not only withhold grace, but condemn men for refuſing it, Pſal. lxxxi. 11, 12. Mat. xxi. 43.

(8.) Fears of Salvation, for want of ſuch graces as God hath promiſed, removed.

But ſome will yet ſay, let all which hath been ſaid be granted, I find that God hath *not fulfilled* theſe his abſolute promiſes to me, for I do not yet *fear* God and *obey* him. How can I hope? How can I chooſe but fear my eſtate to be bad?

Let this for the time be granted, that God hath *not* planted his fear in your heart, &c. as yet;

yet; may he not do it *hereafter?* Since he hath made ſuch excellent and abſolute promiſes of grace, will you not *attend* to the appointed means of grace, and hope for the bleſſing of GOD in his *own time?* And will you not wait, and be glad if they may be fulfilled at *any time? Times and ſeaſons* of GOD's communicating his graces, are reſerved to be at his *own* diſpoſing, not *at ours.* It ſhould be your care diligently to attend upon *GOD's ordinances*, and when you read or hear the Word or Will of GOD, to endeavour to believe and obey it; as when he ſaith; *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Thou ſhalt believe in the name of the Lord thy God, and truſt in his Name. Thou ſhalt obey the Voice of the Lord thy God, and ſerve him*, and ſuch like. Attend to the Word carefully, and becauſe this Word is *infallibly true*, and *excellently good*, labour to *believe*, and to *approve* it; and ſay within yourſelves, theſe are *true*, theſe are *good*, this I ought to do, this I would believe, and do, *Lord help me*, and I will do it; *O that my ways were directed to keep thy ſtatutes*, Pſal. cxix. 5. In ſuch like exerciſes of the reaſonable ſoul, it pleaſeth GOD to give his grace, both to *will* and to *do* his Commandments.

But, ſecondly, do not ſay, that you have not *faith*, and the *fear of God*, and *love to him*, when in truth you *have* them. For what kind of duties be theſe think you? Are they *Legal*, which require perfect, exact, and full degrees of faith, fear, and love? Or are they not *Evangelical?*

Such

Such as requireth *truth* and *ſincerity* in all theſe, and not full and abſolute perfection. If you have true *deſire* to fear him, (which is the one meaſure of the *fear* of GOD's people,) Neh. i. 11. ſo if you *deſire to believe*, Mat. ix. 24. and have a *will to obey*, Iſa. i. 19. in the inmoſt longing of your ſoul, according to the meaſure and ſtrength of grace in you; this, according to the *Tenour of the bleſſed Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, is true and acceptable through Chriſt, for whoſe ſake GOD doth *accept the will for the deed*, in all ſuch caſes wherein there is *truth* of will and endeavour, but *not power* to do, 1 Cor. viii. 12.

Furthermore, if you think that it is *your well doing* that muſt make you acceptable to GOD, you are in a *proud*, and *dangerous* error. Indeed GOD will not accept of you, if you do not *endeavour* to do his will; but you muſt propoſe to yourſelf *another* end, than to be accepted for your well doing: You muſt do your duty to ſhew your *obedience* to GOD, and to ſhew your *thankfulneſs*, that GOD hath pleaſed, and doth pleaſe to accept you in his Son CHRIST; and that it is your *deſire* to be accepted through him.

But I would have you which are *preſſed with* the load of your ſins, look judiciouſly, and impartially into yourſelf, it may be, you have more *faith*, *fear of God*, and *obedience* than you are aware of. Can you *grieve*, and doth it trouble you that you have ſo *little faith*, ſo *little fear* of GOD, and that you ſhew ſo *little obedience?* and is it your deſire and endeavour to have *more*, and

to

to do as well as you *can*; though you cannot do ſo well as you ſhould? Then you have *much faith*, fear, and obedience. For to *grieve for little* faith, fear, and obedience, is an evident ſign of *much* faith, fear, and obedience. For whence is this trouble and grief, but from GOD's ſaving grace? And to grieve for *little*, ſheweth that you *long for* and would have *much*.

Let this ſuffice for a full anſwer to the principal doubts, wherewith *fearful* hearts diſtreſs themſelves continually. Never *yeild* to your fears, *wait* on GOD ſtill for reſolution of your doubts in his beſt time; for it is not *man* that can; but it is *God* that both can and *will ſpeak peace to his people*, not only outward, but *inward* peace, Pſal. lxxxv. 8.

In the mean time, though you can have no feeling comfort in any of GOD's promiſes, yet conſider *God* is the *Lord*, and that Chriſt is Lord of all, and you are his *creature*, owing to him all *obedience*, faith and love: wherefore, you will, as much as you can, keep yourſelf from iniquity, and diligently ſtrive to do his will, let him do *with you* as he pleaſeth; yea, though he *kill you*, or though he give you no comfort till death, you will truſt in him, and will obey him, and it is your deſire to reſt and hope in him as in your Redeemer; then whether *you know* that GOD is yours or no, I am ſure *he knoweth you to be his*; this is an argument of *ſtrong faith*. And you are upon a ſure ground, *The foundation of God remaineth ſure, The Lord knoweth his*, and who be they?

they? Even all that profeſſing his name, *depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. And whoſoever in his heart *would*, he, in truth, *doth* depart from iniquity.

(9.) Fears ariſing from manifold temptations, removed.

Something remaineth yet to be anſwered. Many ſay that do what they can, they are *aſſaulted ſtill ſo thick with temptations*, that they cannot have an hours quiet.

What of that? Doth this hinder your *peace with God*, that the *Devil*, the *World*, and your *Luſts* (GOD's ſworn enemies) *are not at peace with you?* So long as you have peace of *Sanctification* in this degree, that the faculties of ſoul and body do not mutiny againſt GOD's holy will, but hold a good correſpondence in joining together againſt their *fleſhly luſts*, which fight againſt the ſoul, you are in good caſe; I mean, when the *Underſtanding*, *Conſcience*, and *Affections* are all willing to do their part againſt *ſin*, their common enemy: Not but that you will find a ſenſible *warring* and *oppoſition* in all theſe, while you live here, even when you have moſt peace in this kind, but how? The unſanctified part of the underſtanding is againſt the ſanctified part of the underſtanding, and unſanctified will againſt the ſanctified will, and ſo in all other faculties of the ſoul; the *fleſh* in every part luſteth againſt the *ſpirit*, and the *ſpirit* in every part luſteth againſt the *fleſh*, Gal. v. 17. Now if your faculties and powers be ruled all by *one ſpirit*, you have a good

good agreement and *peace* within you, notwithſtanding that the *fleſh* doth ſo violently war againſt the *ſpirit*; for this warring of ſin in your members, againſt the ſpirit; and the warring of the ſpirit againſt ſin, proveth clearly that you have *peace* with GOD, and this war continued, will in time beget *perfect peace*.

But let no man ever look to have *peace* of ſanctification *perfect* in this life; for the beſt are *ſanctified* but in part; wherefore let no man profeſſing *Chriſt* think, that he ſhall be freed from temptations and aſſaults riſing from *within*, or coming from *without*, ſo long as he liveth in this world, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. Are not *Chriſtians* called to be *Soldiers?* Wherefore we muſt arm ourſelves, that we ſtand by the power of GOD's might, and *quit ourſelves like men* againſt the aſſaults of our ſpiritual enemies, 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

Is it any other than the common caſe of all GOD's Children? 1 Cor. x. 13. Was not Chriſt himſelf *tempted*, that he might ſuccour thoſe that are tempted? Heb. ii. 18. Have you not a promiſe not to be tempted above that you are *able?* 1 Cor. x. 13. It is but reſiſting and enduring a while, yet a little while, 1 Pet. v. 10. Heb. x. 37. Is there any temptation out of which GOD will not give a good iſſue? Hath not Chriſt prayed that your faith fail not? Luke xxii. 32. John xvii. 15, 20.

Let us therefore keep *peace in ourſelves*, that the whole man may be at agreement, and let us *keep peace one with another*, fighting againſt the common

common enemy. And the *God of Peace ſhall tread Satan, and all your enemies under foot ſhortly*, Rom. xvi. 20. and then *through Chriſt you ſhall be more than Conquerors*, Rom. viii. 37. you ſhall not only hold what you have obtained from loſing it, but ſhall poſſeſs all that Chriſt hath *won* for you. And the more battles you have fought, and in them *through Chriſt* have overcome, the greater *triumph* you ſhall have in glory.

§. XII. *The Chriſtian's Ground of Hope and Confidence in* GOD, *againſt all Kinds of Fear.*

NOW as a *ſurpluſſage* to all that hath been ſaid againſt *groundleſs fears*, which deprive poor ſouls of heavenly comfort. If any yet cannot be ſatisfied, but fear ſtill that GOD is not at peace with them, I will propoſe a few *Queſtions*, to which if any ſoul can anſwer *affirmatively*, he may be aſſured of *God's* peace and love, and of his own Salvation, whatſoever his fears or feelings may for the preſent be.

1. *How ſtand you affected to Sin?* Are you afraid to *offend* GOD thereby? Is it ſo that you dare not wilfully ſin? Is it your grief and burden that you cannot abſtain from ſin, get the victory over it, or deliver yourſelf from it ſo ſoon as you would, when you are fallen into it?

2. *How ſtand you affected towards holineſs and goodneſs, and unto the power of godlineſs?* Is it your hearty deſire to *know* GOD's will that you may

may *do* it? Do you deſire to fear him, and pleaſe him in *all* things? And is it your grief and trouble when you *fail* in well doing? And is it any joy to you to *do well* in any true meaſure?

3. Thirdly, *How ſtand you affected to the Church and Religion of God?* Are you glad when things go well in the *Church*, though it go ill with *you* in your own particular? And are you grieved when things go ill in the *Church*, when it may happen to be with you, as it was with good *Nehemiah*, Neh. i. 4. or *Ichabod*'s mother, that all things go very well, or at leaſt tolerable well, as to your *own* perſonal concern? 1 Sam. iv. 20, 21.

4. Fourthly, *How ſtand you affected to men?* Is it ſo that you *cannot delight in wicked men*, becauſe of their wickedneſs, but *diſlike them?* Pſal. xv. 4. Whereas otherwiſe their parts and conditions are ſuch, that you could much deſire their company, Pſal. xvi. 4. Do you *love thoſe that fear the Lord*, and that delight in goodneſs, therefore becauſe you think they are good, and are beloved of GOD? 1 John iii. 14. Pſal. xvi. 3.

5. Fifthly, Can you endure to have your ſoul *ript up*, and your *beloved ſin* ſmitten at by a ſearching Miniſter, approving that Miniſtry, and liking that Miniſter ſo much the more? And do you with *David* deſire that the righteous ſhould reprove you? Pſal. cxiv. 5. And would you have an *obedient ear* to a wiſe Reprover? Prov. xxv. 12.

6. Laſtly,

6. Laſtly, Though you have not always that feeling ſenſe of your good eſtate, which is the *certainty* of Evidence? Nay ſay, you have it but ſeldom, or it may be, you can ſcarce tell whether you have it at all; *Do you yet reſolve, or is it your deſire, and will you, as you are able, reſolve to cleave to God, and depend upon Chriſt, and upon God's merciful promiſes made to you in him, ſeeking ſalvation in Chriſt by faith, and by none other, nor by any other means?*

If you can anſwer, *yea*, to *all*, or to *any one* of theſe, you may aſſure yourſelves that you are in GOD's favour, and in a ſtate of grace. What though you cannot feel in yourſelves that you have this ſo ſure as you would by a full *certainty of Evidence*, (but it is your fault that you have it not ſo) yet you have it ſure by the beſt certainty, namely, by a true faith in Chriſt, and an upright *cleaving unto God?* For when you are reſolved not to ſin wilfully, and allowedly againſt GOD, and not to depart from him whatſoever becomes of you; and it is your longing deſire to pleaſe him. When (I ſay) you ſtand thus reſolved, and thus affected, then certainly *God and you are joined together by an inſeperable bond:* When you *hate* what *God* hateth, and *love* what *God* loveth, and *will* what *God* willeth; *are not God and you at peace?* Are you not nearly and firmly united one to another? What tho' this bond be ſomewhat *ſecret and unſeen to yourſelves?* Yet it is *certain*, GOD knoweth you to be actually his, and will *own you*, when you ſeem

ſeem to doubt of it; and will always *hold you by your right hand*, whether you feel it or no, Pſal. lxxiii. 23. But why ſhould you think that you are without *Evidence*, when you cannot but *feel* that in truth you *cleave* thus to GOD, and ſtand thus affected to him: from hence if you were not wanting to yourſelves, you might gain a moſt *peaceable and joyous aſſurance*, that you are in GOD's favour, and ſhall be *ſaved*. Thus much of removing the *impediments* to true peace.

CHAP. XVI.

Shewing the Means to attain this Peace of GOD.

IT yet remaineth, that I ſhould ſhew *furtherances* and *means* to get and keep this true *peace of God* which paſſeth all underſtanding.

§. I. *Cauſes of Error in miſ-judging of Perſons State.*

MEN do often *err* in judging of their own *eſtates*, and in like manner in concluding that they have true *peace* or *not*. You muſt know *what is neceſſary* to the very being of a Chriſtian, *what not*; and this is to be learned only by *the Word of GOD*. For many err therein, becauſe they think that ſuch and ſuch things are *neceſſary* to the being in a ſtate of grace, which are not; and

and ſuch and ſuch things are *ſufficient* to the being of a Chriſtian which are not.

Now you ſhall find, that it is *truth* of faith and other ſaving graces, not the *great degree* and quantity of them that maketh a *Chriſtian*. And that it is not the *moſt forward profeſſion* and form of godlineſs, *without this power and truth* thereof, that will do it.

Nothing is more common than for perſons to be *in truth* otherwiſe than they *judge*. For every man's own ſpirit, ſo far as it is ſinful, is apt to give *a falſe Teſtimony of itſelf*. *David* ſaid *he was cut off from God*, when he was not, Pſal. xxxi. 22. The *Laodiceans thought themſelves in a good ſtate*, when *Chriſt* ſaid they were wretched and miſerable, Rev. iii. 17.

Now that you may not err in this great point, you muſt uſe all good means to have your judgment *rightly informed:* and then be willing to judge of *yourſelf* as you are, and of your *peace with God* as it is.

I told you that the holy Scripture muſt be your guide, in judging *what you ſhould be*, and *what you are*; I mean the *Scripture rightly underſtood*. Now to attain a right underſtanding of the Scripture, and ability to judge yourſelf by it, *whether you be* in a ſtate of grace, from the knowledge whereof cometh *peace*, look back unto chap. viii. ſect. 2. adding unto them theſe following directions.

§. II. *Rules*

§. II. *Rules for a right Judgment of ourſelves.*

1. OBSERVE a difference and diſtinction in true Chriſtians, both in their different *manner* of calling, and *eſtate* after calling. Some are called in infancy, as *Samuel*, and *John Baptiſt*: Some are in middle and old age, as *Abraham*, and *Zaccheus*. Some called without ſenſible terrors of Conſcience, as thoſe before-mentioned. Some with violent heart ach and anguiſh, as St. *Paul* and the Jaylor. In ſome theſe terrors abide longer, in ſome a ſhorter time. And after Converſion all are not of *like* growth and ſtrength. Some are *babes*, weak in judgment and affections; ſome *ſtrong* men, ſtrong in grace generally; but ſtrong alſo in corruption in ſome particular. Some *old* men, ſo well grounded in knowledge, and confirmed in grace, that no luſt getteth a head to prevail in them: Alſo one and the ſame man may be ſometimes in ſpiritual *health* and *ſtrong*, ſometimes under a temptation, *weak*, and *feeble*, ſometimes can pray, &c. and enjoy comfort, ſometimes not. Now, none *muſt* conclude he is no Chriſtian, becauſe he is not *in every thing* like others, nor *at all times* like himſelf.

2. *Truſt not your own judgment or ſenſe, in your own caſe*, whoſoever would underſtand, and be wiſe according to the Scripture, muſt *deny himſelf, and not lean to his own ſenſe or wiſdom*, Prov. iii. 5. but muſt be *a fool that he may be wiſe*, you muſt bring your judgment to be ordered and framed

framed by the *Scriptures*. You muſt not preſume to put a ſenſe of *your own* into the Scripture; but always take the ſenſe and meaning *out of it*. It is preſumption of a man's own opinion, and obſtinacy in his own conceits, which ſpoileth all in this caſe. And whence is this but from his folly and pride? Oh, if you who are troubled in Conſcience could be every way *nothing in yourſelves*; if you could be *humbled and not nouriſh this in you*, you ſhould ſoon know your ſtate and comfort.

I know many of you will wonder that I ſhould charge you with *pride*; you judging yourſelves to be ſo baſe and vile as you do. Well, for all that, I will now prove to your faces, that *it is humility you want*, and if it were not that you were *proud*, you would judge of things otherwiſe than you do.

For firſt you cannot believe in CHRIST (you ſay) becauſe you cannot obey him, and be dutiful to him; if you could obey, then you could believe that he were yours, and you his; whereas, you muſt *firſt believe in Chriſt*, and take him for your Saviour and Lord, and *believe he is yours*, before you can obey him. Can a woman, or ſhould a woman obey a man and carry herſelf towards him as to her huſband, before ſhe believes that *he is* her huſband? If you could obey as you ſhould; Oh, then you think CHRIST would love you; it were well if you could *love* CHRIST, and *obey* him, as it is your duty. But to think he will not ſave you, becauſe you have no goodneſs

goodneſs or worth in you *to cauſe* him to love you, is not this from hence, you would be *ſomething in yourſelf*, for which Chriſt ſhould beſtow his love upon you. Chriſt *marrieth* you not becauſe you *were* good, but that he might *make* you good, that you might know him, &c. Hoſea ii. 19, 20.

But you do not *ſee his work of grace* in you, that he hath made you good, therefore you doubt.

I anſwer, though it may be in you, yet Chriſt hideth it from you, becauſe you will not renounce your own righteouſneſs, and *believe* his mercy, power, and faithfulneſs. Bring your heart to this, (and you have reaſon for it) for the *Father* giveth him, and he giveth himſelf to you in the Word and Sacraments; then you will love him, and obey him abundantly. Is not ſhe a *proud and fooliſh woman*, that may have *a King's ſon*, upon Condition ſhe will ſtrip herſelf of all her own proper goods, and let *him* endow her at his pleaſure, yet ſtill ſhe will be *whining and diſcontented with herſelf*, becauſe ſhe hath *nothing* of her own to bring to him, for which he ſhould love her.

But you will ſtill ſay, CHRIST hath not endowed you with ſo much grace, as to be *able to do* as you would.

Content yourſelves; if you could but ſee that he hath married you *to himſelf*, you then would uſe the *means* which he hath appointed, whereby he

he giveth his graces; you would be *thankful* for what you have, you would pray and *wait* his pleaſure for more, relying on his wiſdom for how much, and when. If you do not thus, then in this you ſhew yourſelves *proud*, in that you prefer your own wiſdom before his.

Let it be ſuppoſed that you are not proud; ſtanding upon terms of having any goodneſs in you, for which Chriſt ſhould love you; but you would with all your hearts be all that you are in *him*, and would be beholden to him for taking you *poor* and *baſe*, *as you are*. Is there no other *pride* (think you) but when you judge well of yourſelves, or would be thought well on for your *goodneſs?* Yes, there is another kind of pride which is as dangerous in this caſe of caufeleſs doubting; and that is, *to be well conceited of, and wedded unto your own knowledge, and to your own opinion* in judging yourſelves. For inſtance, the holy *Scriptures* give you to underſtand (I ſpeak ſtill to ſuch only as with all their ſouls would pleaſe GOD, yet can feel no comfort) that you ſtate, in point of *Salvation*, is good. And *God's experienced children*, yea his *faithful Miniſters*, who dare not lie for GOD, much leſs to *eaſe you*, they according to the *Scriptures* do aſſure you that your ſtate *is not* as you ſay it is; but you think otherwiſe, and having no ſenſible comfort, in your own judgment it is otherwiſe, than either the *Scripture*, or the *Miniſters* ſpeak. Now when you will *prefer your own opinion and ſenſe* (ſuch as it

is) *before the judgment of God's word of truth, and before the judgment of God's Miniſters, judging according to this word,* are you not highly conceited of your own opinion? And are you not *ſtrangely proud?* Though it may be you thought otherwiſe.

Wherefore if you underſtand things aright, you muſt have a mean conceit of your *own* underſtanding, of your *own* opinion, and of your *own* ſenſe. For as you muſt *deny your goodneſs*, and be poor in reſpect of conceit of any *goodneſs* in you, if you would ever expect to have any goodneſs from Chriſt; ſo you muſt deny your *own opinion, knowledge, ſenſe, and wiſdom*, if you would know ſpiritual things aright, and would become *wiſe* through Chriſt.

And that it may appear that you are not *too well conceited* of your own opinion concerning your ſpiritual condition, make uſe in this caſe of *experienced Chriſtians*, but eſpecially of *judicious and godly Miniſters*. Let not fear either of *troubling* them, nor yet of *ſhaming* yourſelf, hinder you. But do it according to theſe directions.

§. III. *Directions for troubled Conſciences, in their Application to Miniſters, or Others.*

FIRST, acquaint ſuch a one with your caſe *betimes*; keep it not to yourſelf too long. For then like a bone *long* out of joint, and a feſtered wound, it will not be ſo well, nor ſo eaſily

eaſily cured: beſide the vexation in the mean time.

Secondly, deal *plainly*, *truly*, and *fully*, in ſhewing the cauſe of your trouble; not doing as many, telling *one* part of your grief, and *not* another, which hath been the cauſe that they have gone away without comfort. Either tell *all* or *none* in this caſe. If you think him not faithful, reveal nothing thereof to him: If you judge him a fit man, then ſhew, as you would do your bodily maladies and diſeaſes to a Surgeon, or Phyſician, if you would have them cured.

Thirdly, believe them rather than *yourſelves* in this caſe; hearken to them, and make uſe of their judgment and experience, and be not preſumptuous of *your own* underſtanding and feeling. In times of your fears and doubts *be not raſh* and ſudden in judging yourſelves. The *Devil* is a juggler, and your eyes are dazzled, and of all men *you are the moſt unfit and incompetent to judge of yourſelves in this caſe*, for when groundleſs ſuſpicion, and cauſeleſs fears have like a head-ſtrong Colt, caught the bit in his teeth, they will (like to other paſſions) carry you head-long whether they liſt, contrary to all right reaſon, and underſtanding. In ſuch ſuſpicion and fear of your eſtate, you are like a *woman* in the fit of her *jealouſy*, ſhe will *pick matter* out of every thing her huſband doth *to increaſe her ſuſpition* of him; if he be ſomewhat ſtrange and auſtere,

then (ſhe ſaith) he loveth her *not*, but others better. If he be kind to her, then ſhe thinketh that this is but to dazzle and *blind* her eyes, that he may without ſuſpicion give himſelf to others. Deal now ingenuouſly, and anſwer whether it *is not*, or whether it *hath not* been ſo with you? I pray obſerve your abſurd and contrary reaſonings. When you *proſper*, thence you infer, ſure GOD doth not love me, for whom he loveth, he correcteth. When GOD *corrects* you, and lays upon you grievous *afflictions*, thence you conclude, ſure GOD is wrath with me, and doth *not love* me. If you be *troubled in conſcience*, Oh, then GOD writes bitter things againſt you, you can have no peace. And when he giveth you *quiet of mind*, Oh, then you fear all riſeth from *preſumption*, your caſe is naught, and it was better with you when you had trouble in mind. Is it not thus? Are you not aſhamed that you have been thus *ſenſeleſs*, and *abſurd* in your own reaſonings; and yet, this *underſtanding*, *reaſon*, *and ſenſe of yours* muſt be hearkened unto, before the truth of *God's Word*, and before the *judgment* of all men, though never ſo judicious. Will any body that is wiſe truſt ſuch a judgment? If an excellent Phyſician for others, is ſeldom found to be the beſt Phyſician for himſelf in a dangerous ſickneſs, but will make uſe of one (it may be) inferior in judgment in Phyſick to himſelf; for his own direction is not ſo well to be truſted in his *own* caſe; then methinks, it ſhould be

your

your wiſdom to make uſe of the judgment of *others*, and not follow *your own* ſenſe.

But you will ſay, ſhall I think *otherwiſe* of myſelf than I *feel?*

I anſwer; aye, in ſome caſes, or elſe you will be counted a wilfull fool, as in the caſe of an *Ague*, you feel your drink to be of an odd reliſh; before you had your *ague*, you knew it was well reliſhed, and thoſe which bring it, tell you it is the ſame, ſtanders by taſte it for you, and ſay it is the ſame, and that it is excellently well reliſhed, I hope you are wiſer in ſuch a caſe as this, then to conclude according to your *feeling*, and *taſte*; every one ſeeth that the fault was in your *palate*, not in the *drink*. Even ſo it is with you when the underſtanding is diſtempered with a *ſhaking fit* of groundleſs, and faithleſs fear: wherefore in this ſtate, *deny your own ſenſe, and truſt not your own judgment*; but hearken unto the judgment of *other* men. And the rather, becauſe GOD doth therefore comfort men, and give them experience of his conſolations, *that they may comfort others in like caſe*, 2 Cor. i. 4. Alſo he hath given commandment to his more underſtanding and confirmed children, that they ſhould *comfort* you; giving *them* to underſtand how it is with you in the matter of your ſoul, better than you can know of yourſelves, 1 Theſ. v. 14. Nay more, GOD hath given to his *Miniſters* the *tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in due ſeaſon to the ſoul that is weary*, Iſa.

I. 4. Should not the judgments of theſe be regarded? But which is moſt of all, GOD hath not only given to *Miniſters ſkill*, to diſcern your ſtate better than yourſelves, but it is the duty of their office *to declare* to you, being penitent, the remiſſion of your ſins, John xx. 23. and to aſſure you, that (if it be with you, according as you thus relate your ſtate to be) you are in GOD's favour, and in a ſtate of grace.

I mean not that you ſhould *reſt your faith* upon any man's judgment; but when judicious men, being in better caſe to judge of you, than you are to judge of yourſelves, ſhall by the *Word of God*, and by *authority from him* give you hope and comfort; *you ought to comfort yourſelves by theſe means.*

Thus much I have ſaid, that your judgment might be fitted to underſtand aright in what ſtate you ſtand. Which if you will obſerve it, it will be an excellent means towards the obtaining of *peace.*

Now I will ſhew by *what means*, you may have juſt cauſe and matter for your judgment to work upon, whence it may give you *peace* and *comfort.*

§. IV. *Means to get and preſerve true Peace.*

IF you would have *peace* and comfort in your ſouls, then firſt and chiefly you muſt *get and cheriſh the ſpirit of God in you*, that it may *ſpeak*

peace

peace to you, and may give you *matter* for your ſpirit to work upon; whereby you may conclude, you are in GOD's favour. For, though I grant, that you can have no ſure evidences of your adoption (ſay whatſoever can be ſaid) *untill your ſpirits can witneſs that you are God's children*; yet your ſpirits are not to be truſted in their witneſſing, but only ſo far as the *Spirit of God doth witneſs to your ſpirits* that it is ſo; that you are indeed his children. Whatſoever comfortable apprehenſion a man may have *in himſelf* of his good eſtate in grace, he can have no true joy, and comfort but by the *holy Ghoſt*, whoſe proper work it is to *comfort*, and is therefore called the *Comforter*, John xiv. 16. For *by him only a man can know*, and by him a man may know *the things which are given him of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 12.

But it will be ſaid, *the Spirit bloweth where it liſteth*, how is it poſſible for any man by any means to *get* it?

In reſpect of man's own ability, it is as impoſſible for him to obtain the divine Spirit to dwell and work in his heart, as it was for thoſe impotent folk, which lay waiting at the *Pool of Bethesda* for the *Angel's* coming to move the waters, to cauſe the ſaid moving of the waters; yet they *waited*, the waters were moved, and they that continued patiently waiting at the *Pool* were benefited, John v. 3, 4. Thus if men will *wait in the uſe of the means* wherein, and

whereby God doth give and continue his holy Spirit to men, they may hope to enjoy this unſpeakable bleſſing.

The firſt means to get the ſpirit, is *humility*; to be ſenſible of the loſs of that which once you had in *Adam*, you muſt *mourn* and *hunger*, and *thirſt* after the *Spirit*, Mat. v. 3, 4, 5, 6. If you will do thus, you may hope for to receive the Spirit. For God ſaith, that *he will pour water upon him that is thirſty, &c. I will pour my ſpirit upon thy ſeed*, ſaith he to *the* Church, Iſa. xliv. 3.

Secondly, that your heart may be ſtirred up to *long* for the Spirit, *you muſt know that there is an holy Ghoſt*, and not only ſo, but you muſt know him to be *God*, and *you muſt believe him to be the Comforter*; and, as it is in our *Creed*, give him this honour and glory, as to *believe in him, and conceive of him as the proper Author of ſanctification and comfort*, this is the way to have the Spirit, and to be ſure of it that you have it. Our Saviour ſaith, that the *not knowing or believing hereof, is the cauſe why the World receive not the Spirit*, John xiv. 17.

Thirdly, *be conſtant and diligent in waiting for the having*, and for the increaſe of the gifts *of the Spirit*, in the holy exerciſes of Religion, as, *reading, and meditating of the Word of God*, eſpecially *of the bleſſed truths and promiſes of the Goſpel, &c.* You muſt wait for it in the motions and ſtirring of God's Word in you by God's means,

means; then as *Cornelius* and his company received it at *Peter's Sermon*, Acts x. 44. and as the *Galatians*, at the *hearing of faith*, ſo may you, Gal. iii. 5. For the *Goſpel* is called the *Miniſtery of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8.

Fourthly, *Pray for the Spirit*, and though you cannot pray well without the Spirit, yet ſince it is GOD's will that you ſhould pray for it, ſet about *Prayer* for it as well as you can, then GOD will enable you to pray for the ſpirit, *and you ſhall have it.* For *Chriſt* ſaith, *If ye that are evil know how to give good gifts to your children: How much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* Luke xi. 13. As theſe are means to *get* the ſpirit, ſo they are means to *continue*, *nouriſh*, and *increaſe* the graces of the Spirit.

Fifthly, If you would keep and nouriſh this Spirit, *you muſt take part with it in it's conflicts with the fleſh* and *ſin:* you muſt not reſiſt, but willingly receive the *comforts* and *motions* of the ſpirit, and muſt do your beſt to bring forth the *fruits* of the Spirit, you muſt take heed that you neither *grieve nor quench the ſpirit*; it is *grieved*, when it is reſiſted, croſſed, or oppoſed any way, Eph. iv. 30, 31. 1 Theſ. v. 19, 20. It is *quenched* as fire is; firſt, *by throwing on water*, all ſinful actions, as they be greater or ſmaller, are as water, they do accordingly more or leſs quench and abate the *Spirit's operations.* Secondly, fire may be quenched and put out *by with-*

drawing of wood and jewel; all neglect, or negligent uſing of the Word, Sacraments, Prayer, Meditation, and holy conference, and communion of Saints; do much offend and quench the ſpirit: Whereas the daily and diligent uſe of all theſe, through his concurring Grace, doth much increaſe and ſtrengthen the life of God in the ſoul; whence muſt needs follow much *peace* and *comfort*.

Now when you have gotten this holy *Spirit*, and have any proofs of the holy *Spirit's* being in you, then you ought to reſt ſatisfied in the *Spirit's witneſs* to your ſpirit, your ſpirit ſhould doubt no more. For even in this that God hath given you his Spirit, the very being of it *in you* is a real proof, and the greateſt confirmation that can be of your being in a *ſtate of grace*. For when you have this *Spirit*, you are *anointed*, 1 John ii. 27. what greater confirmation would you have of being made *Kings and Prieſts to God?* Rev. i. 6. You are alſo by this Spirit *ſealed* to the day of redemption. *What greater confirmation can there be of God's Covenant, and of his Will and Teſtament towards you?* Ephe. iv. 30. It is likewiſe the *Earneſt of your inheritance*, which giveth preſent being, and the beginning to the enjoyment of the bleſſings, and is the ſure evidence of the full poſſeſſion in due time: you are ſo ſurely God's when he hath given you his Spirit, that unleſs you can think he will *looſe his Spirit, the earneſt of which he gave you*, you can have no cauſe

cauſe to think that he will looſe *you*, or *not fulfill* the promiſe of ſalvation made unto you, whereof his Spirit is the *earneſt*, and *part* of the Covenant, 2 Cor. i. 22. Ephe. i. 14.

This *Spirit* doth witneſs to a man, that he is the child of GOD, two ways. Firſt, by *immediate* witneſs and ſuggeſtion. Secondly, by neceſſary *inferences*, by ſigns from the infallible fruits of the ſaid ſpirit; by which latter witneſs you may know the former to be a true teſtimony from GOD's ſpirit, the *ſpirit of Adoption*; and not from a ſpirit of error and preſumption. For this ſpirit of Adoption is a ſpirit of *grace and ſupplication*, Zach. xii. 10. Rom. viii. 26. it is a ſpirit of *godly fear*, Iſa. lxi. 3. and it is a ſpirit of *holy joy*, Acts viii. 8. Where it doth teſtify that you are GOD's children, there it will give you *new* hearts, cauſing you to deſire and endeavour to *live like* GOD's children, in reverend fear and love; leading you in the right way, checking you and calling you back from the way of ſin; ſtirring you up to prayer, with ſighs, deſires, and inward groans; at leaſt making you to confeſs your ſins, and to aſk and hope for pardon in the name of CHRIST, Gal. v. 22. Acts xxiv. 16. Iſa. xxx. 21. And will ſtill be quickening and ſtrengthening you in the ways of godlineſs, and giving you no reſt if you walk not therein. Thus much of the firſt and principal means of getting true peace and comfort.

Secondly,

Secondly, If you would have the invaluable jewel of peace, then *abſtain as much as poſſible from all groſs, and preſumptuous ſins; and from the allowance of any ſin:* for ſin will produce *fear*, even as the ſhadow follows the body. And the more ſin, the more guilt, and the leſs ſin, the leſs guilt: Now, the *leſs guilt* lieth upon the *Conſcience*, the *more peace*, Pſal. li. 14.

Thirdly, *When you fall into ſin*, (for who liveth and ſinneth not) then with all ſpeed *affect your heart with godly ſorrow for it*, cauſe it to be a burden, and a load, and wearineſs to the Conſcience; but withall, *comfort your heart with hope of mercy, forgiveneſs, and grace through Chriſt.* Then with all humble ſubmiſſion you muſt ſeek unto GOD, the *God of peace*, but come to him by *Chriſt Jeſus*, the *Prince of Peace, upon whom lay the chaſtiſement of your peace*, Iſa. ix. 6. Iſa. liii. 5. Aſk repentance, grace, and new obedience. Believe in Chriſt. If you do all this, then *you come unto Chriſt*, and unto GOD by Chriſt, according to his Commandment, and you have his ſure promiſe, that *you ſhall have reſt to your ſouls*, Mat. xi. 29. This do, for *in Chriſt only can you have Peace*, John xvi. 33. This true application of CHRIST's blood, and ſatisfaction, will ſo *ſprinkle the Conſcience* from the guilt of ſin, Heb. ix. 14. x. 12. *that there ſhall remain no more Conſcience for ſin*, that is, no more guilt which ſhall draw upon you any puniſhment

puniſhment for ſin; whence muſt needs follow *peace of Conſcience*; Heb. x. 2. becauſe the Conſcience hath nothing to accuſe you of, *guiltineſs being waſhed away by Chriſt's blood*, Heb. ix. 14. As ſoon as *David*, after his foul ſins, could come thus to GOD, his heart had *eaſe*, Pſal. xxxii. 1—5.

But when you have thus gotten a good and clear Conſcience, take heed of *defiling it again*, or giving it any matter of uneaſineſs; be as tender in keeping your Conſcience *unſpotted*, and *unwounded*, as you are of the apple of your eye. Sin not againſt knowledge and Conſcience, and in any caſe ſmother not the good checks and motions of your Conſcience. For if being waſhed, you do again *defile* it, this will cauſe *new trouble* of heart, and you muſt again apply yourſelves to this *laſt* preſcribed remedy.

In the fourth place, CHRIST having taken upon him *the burden of your ſins*, which was intollerable, you muſt take upon you, and ſubmit unto *the yoke of Chriſt's ſervice*, which is light and eaſy, Mat. xi. 29. You muſt endeavour to do whatſoever he hath *commanded* in his Word and Goſpel, following his ſteps in all his *imitable* actions; in all humility and meekneſs, in all ſpiritual and heavenly mindedneſs. When you can thus ſubject yourſelves to Chriſt in *holineſs*, you ſhall have *Peace*. For the holy Ghoſt ſaith the *work of righteouſneſs is Peace*, Iſa. xxxii. 17. and again ſaith, *to be ſpiritually minded is Peace*, that

is,

is, bringeth with it peace, Rom. viii. 6. I comprehend CHRIST's yoke of the *Goſpel* in theſe three things, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Love*. As theſe three be in you and abound, in the ſame degrees ſhall *Peace* be in you, and ſhall abound.

Having Faith in Chriſt (ſaith the Apoſtle) *we have peace with God*, Rom. v. 1. It is GOD that juſtifieth, who ſhall lay any thing to your charge? Rom. viii. 33. For *juſtifying Faith* is the ground and ſpring, from which only ſound and true *comfort* doth flow.

Hope will make you wait, and expect with patience the accompliſhment of GOD's ſure promiſes; whereby it will hold you as ſteady, and as ſure from wrack of ſoul, as any *Anchor* can hold a ſhip; GOD doth therefore give hope, that it may be as an *Anchor*, *ſure and ſtedfaſt*; Rom. viii. 25. Though while you are in the ſea of this world, it doth not keep you ſo quiet, but that you may be in ſome meaſure toſſed and diſquieted with the waves and billows of *fear* and *doubt*, to try the goodneſs of your veſſel, and ſtrength of your Anchor, &c. *Yet you ſhall be ſure not to make ſhipwreck of Faith and a good Conſcience, if you ſhall lay hold upon this hope ſet before you*, Heb. vi. 18, 19.

And as for *Love*, *they that love the Lord ſhall have peace*, you muſt therefore *love* GOD, *love* his ordinances and his people; *Love* GOD with all your heart; *Love* your neighbours as yourſelves, *love* GOD's Commandments. *For great*

Peace

Peace ſhall they have (ſaith the Prophet) *that love God's Law, and nothing ſhall offend them*, Pſal. cxix. 165.

Whoſoever do thus take up Chriſt's yoke, and follow him, ſhall find *reſt to their ſouls*; and *Peace ſhall be upon them, as upon the Iſrael of God.* Mat. xi. 29. Gal. vi. 16.

Fifthly, If you would have peace, *uſe all good means, whereby you may be often put in remembrance of the exhortations and conſolations of God.* They in the *Hebrews* were therefore diſquieted, and ready to faint in their minds, becauſe *they forgat the exhortation*, which ſaid, *My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, &c.* Heb. xii. 5. And becauſe *they forgat the conſolation*, which ſaith, *Whom the LORD loveth, he chaſteneth*, Heb. xii. 6.

The principal means of being put in mind of GOD's conſolations, are theſe following.

1. *You muſt be much converſant in the Scriptures*, by reading, hearing, and meditating thereon. *For they were all written to that end, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, you might have hope*, Rom. xv. 4.

The Scriptures of GOD, they are the very *Wells* and *Breaſts of conſolation* and *ſalvation*, Iſa. xii. 3. lxvi. 11. The *Law* diſcovers ſin, and by its threats againſt you, and by relating judgments executed upon others, *doth drive you to Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 24. The *promiſes of the Goſpel* made to you, and the accompliſhment thereof

to

to others, *do ſettle and confirm you in Chriſt*, whereby your heart is filled with joy and conſolations. The *Goſpel* is called the *Goſpel of Peace*, and the *Miniſters* of the *Goſpel* are ſaid to *bring glad tidings of this Peace*, Rom. x. 15. It is the bright ſhining light in the *Goſpel*, which will *guide your feet in the way of Peace*, Luke i. 79.

2. *Be much in good company, eſpecially in theirs, who are full of Joy and Peace in believing*, whoſe example and counſel will mind you of joy and comfort, and will be of excellent uſe unto you, to eſtabliſh you in peace.

Sixthly, and laſtly, *acquaint yourſelf with God, concerning the courſe he uſeth to take with his children in bringing them to glory; acquaint yourſelf with God alſo in praying much for Peace*, unto him who is the *God of Peace*, the *Father of mercies, and the God of all conſolation*; then you ſhall have *Peace*, and much good ſhall be unto you, Job xxi. 21, 23. For it is GOD *that ſpeaketh Peace to his People*, wherefore aſſuredly his anſwer to him that aſketh *Peace*, will be an anſwer of *Peace*, even *this Peace which paſſeth all underſtanding*, Pſal. lxxxv. 8. GOD ſhall give you *Peace*, and with it *glory*, even a *glorious Peace*.

Thus, having ſhewn you the *excellency* of peace, together with the *impediments*, *furtherances*, and *means* of peace. Shun the *impediments*, improve the *furtherances*, and I dare aſſure you, that although in this life you may ſtill feel a *conflict* between faith and doubting, between

tween hope and fear, and between peace, and trouble of mind; yet in the *end* you ſhall have *perfect peace*; and in the mean time, though I cannot promiſe you to have always that *Peace*, which will afford you *ſenſe of joy*; yet God hath promiſed, that you ſhall have that *which ſhall keep your hearts and minds in Chriſt Jeſus*; and what would you have more? Pſal. xxxvii. 37.

I thank God I have reaped much benefit to myſelf in ſtudying, and penning theſe directions. *I pray God* that you may reap much good in reading of them. *Now the God of hope fill you with all Joy and Peace in believing. And the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, by the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt, to whom be glory for ever and ever,* Amen.

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